A QUESTION OF LEGITIMACY?
North Korea, China and the Korean Nuclear Crisis.

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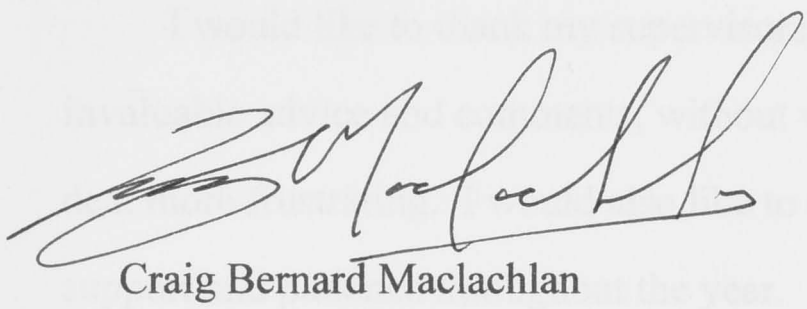
DECLARATION

I declare that the following thesis has been researched and written by myself, and that all sources used have been acknowledged.



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ABBREVIATIONS

Common abbreviations used throughout this thesis:

CCP: Chinese Communist Party.

DMZ: Demilitarised Zone.

DPRK: Democratic People's Republic of Korea (also referred to as North Korea).

IAEA: International Atomic Energy Agency.

KPA: Korean People's Army.

KWP: Korean Worker's Party.

LWR: Light Water Reactor.

MFN Most Favoured Nation

NPT: Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

PRC: People's Republic of China.

ROK: Republic of Korea (also referred to as South Korea).

UN: United Nations.

US: United States of America.

USSR: The former Soviet Union.

ABSTRACT

During the recent Korean nuclear crisis much attention has centred on two key factors: firstly, the rationale that lies behind the DPRK nuclear program, and secondly, the role of China in the settlement of the dispute. Explanations of the DPRK rationale have centred on the declining military situation that the DPRK now faces, and have thus tended to argue that the nuclear program is one based on addressing the DPRK's strategic concerns. While not discounting this factor as an influence in the rationale of DPRK action, this thesis argues that such an explanation is too simplistic and ignores the crises now faced by the DPRK. In the pages that follow, it is argued that the legitimacy of the DPRK state and the ruling Kim regime has been dealt a severe blow by the collapse of Communism in Europe and elsewhere. In this state of legitimacy crisis, the Kim regime has turned to nuclear weapons as the most effective means of securing the long term existence and legitimacy of the DPRK and the ruling regime.

The Korean nuclear crisis also provides an interesting case study of Chinese foreign policy behaviour. Chinese reaction to the nuclear crisis has alternated between support for its socialist ally the DPRK, and cautious condemnation of the DPRK nuclear program. Chinese foreign policy during the crisis has been characterised by a dual approach; one that has sought to protect China's economic and ideological interests. This dualism, it is argued, is a direct result of the Chinese Communist Party's search for legitimacy in the post-Mao period. Since the beginnings of Deng's economic reform program, the legitimacy of the CCP and the Chinese state has rested on the maintenance of China's socialist national identity and the enrichment of China through Deng Xiaoping's economic reform program. As an instrument in this quest for legitimacy, Chinese foreign policy has been characterised by a certain dualism, as it strives to serve the economic and ideological foundations of party and state legitimacy.

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INTRODUCTION

Legitimacy, it is argued, is a fundamental principle of political life. Weber argued in *Economy and Society*, that a government that is deemed to be morally right (ie: legitimate) in its rule, is inherently more enduring and less costly than rule by might (ie: illegitimate).[1] As such, legitimacy is a fundamental goal of all governments in their quest for political survival. While the need for legitimate rule is rarely doubted, questions surrounding the foundations of legitimacy, and the means by which it should be secured, have been at the centre of debate since Weber produced *Economy and Society*. Referring to Weber again, legitimacy is described as being founded on one of three factors: rational or legal authority; traditional authority; and charismatic authority.[2] While these divisions have been criticised as being too static, as a starting point for understanding the basic elements of legitimacy they are somewhat useful.[3] From a brief look through history it becomes clear that leaders have used a combination of the above definitions, in order to secure their legitimacy. Such was almost certainly the case with regard to the presidency of John F. Kennedy, the legitimacy of which relied on both charismatic and rational authority. Furthermore, it is clear that in states where the political process is dominated by one party, legitimacy is not a static feature. As the leaders of these parties change, so too does the basis of political legitimacy. This has clearly been the case in both China (PRC) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), where the shift from Mao to Deng, and Kim Il Sung to Kim Jong Il respectively, has resulted in a shift in the basis of legitimacy from charismatic

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[1] M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, Roth, G. & Wittich, C. (eds.), Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978 in S. Kim, "Peking's Foreign Policy in the Shadows of Tienanmen: The Challenge of Legitimation", *Issues and Studies*, January 1991, pp.39-40.

[2] M. Weber, *Economy and Society*, Roth, G. & Wittich, C. (eds.), Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978, vol.1, p.215.

[3] S. Kim, "Peking's Foreign Policy in the Shadows of Tienanmen: The Challenge of Legitimation", opcit., p.42.

authority to a form of traditional and legal authority, in which ultimate legitimacy relies on the performance of the leader.[4]

While accepting that the basic principles of legitimacy involve one, or a combination of Weber's elements of authority, it is also important for the purposes of this thesis to consider the scope of legitimacy. Is legitimacy merely a goal of domestic governments, or is it a factor in the operation of the international system? John Herz has argued (with some qualifications), the existence of two levels of legitimacy: group legitimacy and regime legitimacy.[5] Group legitimacy is a reflection of the human desire to belong to groups of similar values. Membership of a group of individuals with like-minded values gives legitimacy not only to one's own views, but also to the views of the group as a whole. While it can be somewhat misleading to anthropomorphise the actions of states, it is clear that like-minded states do form groups within the international system.[6] The benefits derived by the state, from this identity with a larger group, are twofold. Firstly, membership of a group provides the internal regime with international recognition of the legitimacy of its political and social order. Secondly, it provides the state the opportunity to exercise international leadership, where, in the absence of a group, it might be unable to do so.[7] In light of this, so long as the state maintains its identity with the group, its international legitimacy, and the legitimacy of the group will be maintained.[8] At times during the process of political development however, when the values of the group that were once unquestionably held as the truth are no longer acceptable under new conditions, the individual states must redefine who, and what they are, and how they differ from others.[9] Not only is this search an identity crisis, it is also a legitimacy crisis, in so far as

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[4] In reference to the foundations of legitimacy for both Mao and Deng see F. Teiwes, *Leadership, Legitimacy and Conflict in China*, New York, M.E. Sharpe, 1984, section two. In the case of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, refer to R. Scalapino, *The Last of the Leninists*, Washington D.C., Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1992, p.55.

[5] J. Herz, "Legitimacy: Can We Retrieve It?", *Comparative Politics*, April 1978, p.318.

[6] L. Dittmer & S. Kim, "In Search of a Theory of National Identity", in L. Dittmer & S. Kim, (eds.), *China's Quest for National Identity*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1993, p.5.

[7] ibid., p.16.

[8] J. Herz, "Legitimacy: Can We Retrieve It?", op. cit., p.321.

[9] L. Pye, "Identity and the Political Culture", in L. Binder, et al., *Crises and Sequences in Political Development*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1979, pp.110-111.

the state is no longer able to fulfil its obligations to human desires to be a part of a group. So strong is the desire to be a part of a group, that in the wake of one identity crisis, a state will attempt to realign itself with another group as a means of restoring its external legitimacy.[10]

The effects of a legitimacy crisis at a group level can be clearly seen in the experiences of China and North Korea. The legitimacy (group legitimacy) of these states in the international community during the Cold War period was sustained by their identity with the global communist movement, and a concurrent identification with the Third World.[11] The applicability of these traditional sources of national identity that have been the foundation of the group legitimacy of both North Korea and China, has declined. In the post-Cold War period, the physical and psychological definitions (to use Pye's terms) of the Communist group and the Third World have been thrown into disarray by the collapse of the former, and the serious divisions that plague the latter. The result has been to cause a legitimacy crisis in North Korea and China. Devoid of group legitimacy through shared identity, these nations have sought other means to re-establish their legitimacy within the international system. In particular, these nations have addressed their external legitimacy crises through attempts to realign themselves with other legitimising groups. The period following the collapse of East European communism witnessed a renewed emphasis on the Third World and East Asian communism's vitality in their foreign policy.

In contrast, the second level of legitimacy proposed by Herz, regime legitimacy, refers to the internal legitimacy of a government rather than the external legitimacy of the state. While Herz's definition of internal legitimacy is limited to that of the ruling regime, the concept is applicable to the legitimacy of ruling factions within a particular regime. The legitimacy of a regime or faction is directly dependent on its ability to fulfil the tasks required of it by the society it governs.[12] Crises in internal or regime legitimacy occur when

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[10] L. Dittmer & S. Kim, "In Search of a Theory of National Identity", op. cit., p.17.

[11] For a history of China's association with the Communist Bloc and the Third World see: L. Dittmer, "China's Search for Its Place in the World", in B. Womack, *Contemporary Chinese Politics in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp.209-261.

[12] J. Herz, "Legitimacy: Can We Retrieve It?", op. cit., p.321.

the regime's ability to deliver to the people's expectations begins to decline. In recent years the occurrence of legitimacy crises at the regime level have become more pronounced, particularly in developing countries such as China. The abundance of information in the modern world, even in a relatively closed society such as China, has been the fundamental factor behind the growing legitimacy crises facing governments everywhere. This abundance of information is a direct consequence of the developmental process. It is inevitable that as a nation develops, its population is introduced to an ever widening range of possibilities.[13] It is this widening perception of possibilities that can undermine the legitimacy of a regime, either through the generation of competing bases of authority; the collapse of ideological bases of authority under the pressures of new popular knowledge and interpretation; or finally, through the development of new popular understandings of authority that prove to be dysfunctional for the efforts of the current leaders.[14]

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has itself been in the grips of a legitimacy crisis at the regime level since 1989. This legitimacy crisis is in part a reflection of the legitimacy crisis now facing the ruling Dengist clique. The legitimacy of this clique, and the CCP has been based firmly on the success of the economic reform program that has been carried out since the Third Plenum of 1978.

The reform process however, has been a double-edged sword in the legitimacy crisis now facing the Dengist faction and the CCP. Not only has it opened the eyes of the wider Chinese population to the range of possibilities that exist, in both political and economic life, but it has also sewn the seeds of popular discontent. The expectations of the broader Chinese population have increased at a time when the negative impact of the reform program on the environment, inflation, official corruption, and on the growing migrant working class, has begun to reveal itself. It was this dichotomy that fuelled the frustrations and disquiet that developed into the student and worker protests in May and June of 1989.[15]

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[13] L. Pye, "The Legitimacy Crisis", in Binder, L. et al., op. cit., p.138.
[14] ibid., p.138.
[15] S. Kim, "Peking's Foreign Policy in the Shadows of Tienanmen: The Challenge of Legitimation", op. cit., p.49.

While the massacre of students in Tiananmen Square during June 1989 brutally confirmed the depth of the CCP's legitimacy crisis, no similar event has tested the legitimacy of the North Korean regime. Nevertheless, the extent of the economic hardships facing the North Korean population must be placing a strain on the legitimacy of the Kim regime. It would seem that the only option open to the Kim regime is one of economic reform. If Kim Jong Il is to undertake reform however, he must avoid making the mistakes that have led to the legitimacy crisis now faced by the CCP. The dilemma for Kim Jong Il and the DPRK leadership is one of obtaining the positive benefits of economic assistance and reform without the negative effects of 'spiritual pollution'.

The role of foreign policy in this dualistic model of legitimacy is not limited to the domain of external legitimacy. Foreign policy can, and has been used, as a tool to secure not only a nation's international legitimacy and identity, but also a regime's internal legitimacy. As a means of securing the external legitimacy of a state, foreign policy may be employed to emphasise its common ties with other nations. Furthermore, foreign policy may be used as a means of protecting state interests and sovereignty from the threats of other states and groups which do not share a similar identity. As an instrument in the generation of internal or regime legitimacy, foreign policy may be used as a source of differentiation; a means of distinguishing one's own society from any other, which in turn provides a source of national identity that will enhance the legitimacy of the regime. This is particularly the case in developing nations, where leaders who are the frequent subject of criticism by comparison with the achievements of Western nations, may use foreign policy to condemn the achievements of those nations. Through the condemnation of the authority of Western nations, the leaders of developing nations are able to secure their own legitimacy.[16]

The interaction between foreign policy and the search for legitimacy has been a key element of the current nuclear crisis that has descended upon the Korean peninsula. The proliferation of nuclear weapons is a significant challenges which the world and Northeast

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[16] L. Pye, "The Legitimacy Crisis", op. cit., p.150.

Asia face in the immediate post-Cold War period. The threat of a nuclear armed DPRK has raised considerable debate on what anti-proliferation states, such as the US, should do in their campaign to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons.[17] The unpredictable and often violent nature of the DPRK regime, and the possibility that events on the peninsula may spark wholesale regional proliferation has emphasised the need for action in this case.[18] Until recently however, the efforts of the US and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have failed to bring about an end to the dispute.[19] Why is this so? The US has adopted many different strategies, ranging from direct negotiations to direct threats, yet these strategies have failed to secure firm guarantees on the future of the North Korean nuclear program. Likewise, US moves to obtain greater involvement of China in the settlement of the issue, have for all intents and purposes failed to bring substantive Chinese support for its anti-proliferation stance. Clearly the difficulty the US has had in obtaining North Korean compliance and firm support from China, suggests that it has failed to address the key motivational forces that lie behind North Korea's nuclear program, and China's distanced and ambiguous stance on the issue.

This raises the obvious question of what rationale lies behind the actions of both North Korea and China in this issue? It is the central argument of this thesis, that the actions of the DPRK, and China, are only partially driven by their concerns with their strategic environment. The possession of nuclear weapons would offer the DPRK a low cost solution to its declining military parity with the Republic of Korea (ROK). Likewise, it could be suggested that the chief motivation of Chinese action is the desire to protect its

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[17] Estimates of the size of North Korea's nuclear arsenal vary from as little as none or possibly one primitive device, to as many as ten warheads of up to 50 Kt by the end of 1994. Using the evidence of North Korean military and scientific defectors, and KGB reports, Yossef Bodansky has argued that the DPRK possess at least eight such warheads and the means to deliver these to targets in Japan. Y. Bodansky, "The North Korean Nuclear Arsenal Is Deployed, Despite Face Saving Agreements With the US", *Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 31 July 1994, pp.7-10.

[18] During the 1980s, North Korea committed several terrorist attacks against politicians and airlines of the Republic of South Korea. Larry Niksch has expressed concern over the possible future use of nuclear devices in any future campaign of terror by the DPRK. A. Mack, *Nuclear Dilemmas: Korean Security in the 1990s*, Canberra, Peace Research Centre Working Paper no.1992/9, Australian National University, 1992, p.4.

[19] The majority of research and writing for this thesis was completed prior to the October 21 agreement between the US and the DPRK. Despite this agreement, considerable questions remain regarding the future of the North Korean nuclear program, and the future of the agreement itself. For a more detailed examination of these issues refer to the following chapter.

strategic interests on the Korean peninsula, through the support of its long time ally and buffer zone, the DPRK. While not denying this strategic factor, it is argued here and in the chapters that follow, that the actions of the DPRK and China are symptoms of a broader identity and legitimacy crisis that has been aggravated, in both nations, by the end of the Cold War. Both nations, now isolated by the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, are struggling to save their national identity and legitimacy as socialist states. Furthermore, each is in the grip of an internal legitimacy crisis, in which the authority of the ruling parties is at stake. An explanation of North Korean and Chinese behaviour solely in terms of their strategic concerns, fails to take into consideration the effects of these legitimacy crises on their actions. While not offering the definitive explanation, an examination of North Korean and Chinese actions within the context of these legitimacy crises, does offer a more accurate and meaningful analysis of events during the nuclear crisis. Using this context, it will be argued that North Korea has seized on the nuclear program as the best means by which it will be able to secure the internal and external legitimacy. It is, in the minds of the Kim regime, an opportunity for it to secure the long term future of its rule, and the future of the North Korean state. In contrast, an examination of Chinese actions within the context of these legitimacy crises produces a different result. The Korean nuclear crisis presents China with a dilemma rather than an opportunity. It is argued that China's actions in the crisis are dictated by the conflicting needs of external and internal legitimacy; a conflict between the needs of ideology and economic necessity.

With a view to examining in depth the role of legitimation in the actions of North Korea and China during the Korean nuclear crisis, this thesis begins with an analysis of the events of the crisis as they have transpired. In particular it focuses on the actions of North Korea, and the reactions of the US to the threat of a nuclear armed DPRK. The second chapter turns to examine North Korea's rationale behind its nuclear program and its actions during the nuclear crisis. After consideration of the first chapter's evidence, it is argued that North Korea's rationale for nuclear weapons cannot be solely explained in terms of a

concerted effort to address the DPRK's strategic needs. Such an explanation ignores the growing legitimacy crises now facing the DPRK and its ruling party. In view of this crisis, it is argued that a key factor in the DPRK rationale for its nuclear weapons program is that of securing the legitimacy of the North Korean state and the Kim Jong Il regime. It concludes by arguing that it has been the dialectical demands of this search for external and internal legitimacy that has frustrated US attempts to secure the end of the nuclear program. The third chapter turns to face the question of China's ambiguous role in the nuclear crisis. Here it is argued, that like North Korea, China's behaviour during the nuclear crisis indicates that its actions are only partially dictated by its strategic concerns. It is argued that Chinese behaviour is more effectively explained by its need to secure the external legitimacy of the Chinese state and the internal legitimacy of the ruling regime. The need to address the conflicting demands of ideology and economics has resulted in a dualistic foreign policy that has dominated China's relationships with many of the participants in the crisis. This has had a direct impact on China's approach to the nuclear issue and is reflected in China's concurrent support and condemnation of both North Korea and the Western nations that seek to put an end to the DPRK nuclear program. Finally, this thesis concludes with an assessment of the role of Chinese and North Korean foreign policy in their quest for legitimacy. In doing so, it will also seek to highlight the implications of Chinese and North Korean actions for the future of the Northeast Asia region.

CHAPTER ONE

TREADING THE NUCLEAR PATH: NUCLEAR CRISIS ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA.

In contrast to the euphoria that spread across Europe at the end of the Cold War, Northeast Asia has been confronted with an issue which reminds us that in corners of the globe, old habits and feelings die very hard indeed. The North Korean nuclear crisis presents the greatest challenge to the Northeast Asia region since the end of the Cold War. The implications of a nuclear armed North Korea for regional security are very grave. The crisis has heightened concerns within Northeast Asia and the Clinton administration over the possibility of widespread nuclear proliferation, not only within the immediate region, but also further afield to the volatile regions of the Middle East. For the IAEA, the North Korean nuclear crisis presents both an opportunity and a challenge to its role as nuclear watchdog. The IAEA is anxious that there not be a repeat of the criticism it received following the surprise revelations of the extent of Iraq's nuclear program following the Gulf War. Concurrently, the nuclear watchdog hopes that its actions present to other would-be proliferators, the image of an organisation intent on the prevention of nuclear proliferation. This chapter examines the development of the North Korean nuclear program, and the events following the DPRK's threat to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) in March 1993, up to the breakdown of the August 13 agreement between the US and the DPRK. In conclusion, it is argued that the difficulties the US and the IAEA have experienced in their attempts to secure an end to the nuclear crisis have resulted from a failure to accurately address the concerns of the DPRK and those of the North's main ally, China. These concerns will be examined more closely in the chapters that follow.

The concern over the direction of the DPRK nuclear program reached a crescendo on March 12, 1993, after the North Korean government decided to withdraw from the NPT. The DPRK nuclear program itself originated during the 1950s, however, following several

agreements between the DPRK and the Soviet Union (USSR) on the training of North Korean scientists in the field of nuclear physics.[1] The DPRK denunciation of the partial ban on nuclear testing agreement between the US, USSR, and Great Britain can be seen as an ominous sign of its own interest in nuclear weapons development. The DPRK began operation of its first reactor, a small 2-4 megawatt reactor donated by the Soviet Union, in 1967. During the 1970s the North undertook an extensive nuclear development program, including requests made to the Chinese for technical assistance.[2] By 1980, the DPRK had begun construction of its first indigenous reactor at Yongbyon. The reactor was based on the graphite moderated model used by the early British and American reactors. It was not until 1987 that the reactor finally came on line with a 5mw capacity, somewhat lower than its expected 30 MW capacity.[3]

US concerns over the construction of this 5 MW reactor came to a head in 1984 when it approached the Soviet Union for assurances on the nature of the DPRK nuclear program. The Soviet Union, which shared a mutual interest with the US in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, applied pressure to the DPRK to join the NPT.[4] In 1985 the DPRK acceded to the NPT in return for several agreements with the Soviet Union on the delivery of nuclear assistance, including the provision of a power plant, and for trade during the forth coming period of 1985-90. Despite signing the NPT however, the DPRK failed to undertake a safeguards agreement with the IAEA within the following eighteen months, as required by the NPT.[5] The DPRK continued to stall its signing of an accord with the IAEA, obtaining a further extension of eighteen months on the grounds of administrative faults. The DPRK finally signed a safeguards agreement with the IAEA in

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[1] J. Bermudez, "North Korea's Nuclear Program", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 1991, p.405.

[2] Available evidence suggests that China did provide significant assistance to the DPRK, although it is likely not to have been as extensive as Kim Il Sung would have hoped. North Korean interest in the Chinese nuclear program is perhaps reflected by visits to the Lop Nor test site and the Seventh Machine Industry Ministry (responsible for ballistic missiles) by KWP Secretary, Kang Song-san. J. Bermudez, ibid., p.408.

[3] J. Bermudez, ibid., p.408.

[4] A. Mack, "The Nuclear Crisis on the Korean Peninsular", *Asian Survey*, vol.xxxiii, no.4, April 1993, p.346.

[5] E. Chauvistre, "North Korea", *Pacific Research*, May 1993, p.6; A. Mack, "Security and the Korean Peninsula in the 1990s", in A. Mack, (ed.) *Asian Flashpoint: Security and the Korean Peninsula*, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, 1993, p.3.

January of 1992. Immediately following the signing, South Korea announced the cancellation of the 1992 joint US-ROK "Team Spirit" military exercises. The DPRK had long regarded these exercises as highly provocative, and they were later to become a focal point in the US-DPRK discussions during 1993-94.

By the time of the IAEA safeguards ratification in 1992, concerns over the nature of the DPRK nuclear program were already being expressed. The continual delays in obtaining DPRK ratification of a safeguards agreement, coupled with mounting evidence that a reprocessing facility was under construction at Yongbyon, gave reason for US officials to publicly announce their suspicions of a DPRK nuclear weapons program in 1989. DPRK nuclear intentions were again brought forward in November of 1990 when then Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze was told that the DPRK would have no choice other than to seek nuclear weapons by its own means, should the Soviet Union establish relations with the ROK.[6] Despite this evidence, the beginning of 1992 heralded new developments in the nuclear issue that helped allay, if only temporarily, western fears of the DPRK nuclear program. In addition to the signing of the NPT, the DPRK also signed a Joint Declaration on a Non-nuclear Korean Peninsula and an Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression and Cooperative Exchanges, in December 1991. The DPRK felt that by signing these agreements it would dispel completely the concerns of Western nations.[7]

Contrary to these expectations of the DPRK however, the IAEA inspections carried out during 1992 were rigorous and exacting. Under pressure to avoid repeating the mistakes that had surrounded the monitoring of the Iraqi nuclear program, the IAEA undertook five inspections of DPRK nuclear facilities. The results of the tests suggested that the North Koreans had extracted plutonium on no fewer than four occasions between 1989 and 1992.[8] This was in stark contrast to the one "experimental" production of

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[6] Y. Song, "North Korea's Potential to Develop Nuclear Weapons", *Vantage Point*, vol.xiv, no.8, August 1991, p.3. It was also reported that Kim Yong-Sun, a secretary for international affairs for the KWP, had informed China of the DPRK's decision to acquire nuclear weapons following the failure of the August coup of 1991 in Russia. "China Told of DPRK Nuclear Weapons Decision", *FBIS-CHI-91-186*, 25 September 1991, p.8.

[7] Research Institute for Peace and Security, Tokyo, *Asian Security 1993-1994*, London, Brassey's, 1993, p.31.

[8] P. Bracken, "Nuclear Weapons and State Survival in North Korea", *Survival*, vol.35, no.3, Autumn 1993, p.140.

plutonium admitted to have occurred in 1990.[9] Furthermore, images from French and US satellites revealed that nuclear waste (presumably from reprocessing facilities) had been buried, and an attempt to conceal the waste had been made.[10] As a result of these findings, the IAEA requested special inspections, the first ever in the history of the IAEA, of two undeclared suspected waste storage sites at Yongbyon. The DPRK officials refused to allow the "special inspections", arguing that the officials on the previous inspections had got their facts wrong because some officials had conducted their work in a hasty and unprofessional manner.[11]

In response to the continual denial of inspection rights by the DPRK, the IAEA issued an ultimatum for North Korea to open the named sites to IAEA inspectors by March 25, 1993. The North refused to accede to the demands of the IAEA. On March 12, Pyongyang declared that it would withdraw from the NPT, referring to the continued threats to its sovereignty from the reinstated "Team Spirit" exercises, which had commenced on March 9, and what it regarded as demonstrated partiality by a US dominated IAEA.[12] Despite the sudden withdrawal and the anti-US and IAEA rhetoric, the DPRK made it clear that it would return to the NPT on the condition that a number of requests be fulfilled. Specifically, the North required: the end of the 'Team Spirit' exercises; inspections of US military bases in South Korea; removal of the nuclear threat against North Korea; removal of the US nuclear umbrella over the ROK; respect for the DPRK socialist state; and restoration of the impartiality of the IAEA.[13] Almost immediately following the notification of its intent to withdraw from the NPT, the DPRK held talks with US officials

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[9] N. Chanda, "Hide and Seek: Technical clues unmask nuclear capability", *Far Eastern Economic Review* (hereafter FEER), 10 February 1994, p.19. The North Koreans claim to have only extracted 90 grams of Plutonium from some damaged fuel rods.

[10] J. Smith, "N. Korea and the Bomb: high tech hide-and-seek; US intelligence key in detecting deception", *Washington Post*, 27 April 1993, p.A1. in P. Bracken, op. cit., p.140.

[11] J. Cotton, "UN Dilemma Over North Korea", *The Canberra Times*, 31 March 1993, p.13.

[12] K. Moeller & M. Tidten, "North Korea and the Bomb: Radicalisation in Isolation", *Aussenpolitik*, vol.45, no.1, 1994, p.105. "Report on DPRK Withdrawal From Nuclear Pact", *FBIS-CHI-93-048*, 15 March 1993, p.4-5. The withdrawal was to become effective, after a 90 day interim period on June 12.

[13] *Segye Times*, 16 March 1993; *Mainichi Shimbu*, 17 March 1993. cited in S. Cheon, "North Korea's Nuclear Problem: Current State and Future Prospects", *The Korean Journal of Unification*, vol.2, 1993, p.91.

in Beijing on March 17.[14] These negotiations proved to be of no avail however, and on April 1, the IAEA Board of Governors decided at a meeting in Vienna to refer the dispute to the UN Security Council.

The decision to refer the DPRK nuclear dispute to the UN Security Council met with mixed response from surrounding nations. China strongly opposed the referral to the UN, claiming that the issue should be dealt with by individual nations as they see fit, and that problems with Pyongyang should be resolved through patient negotiations.[15] Japan's Foreign Minister made clear his government's position when he rejected the imposition of economic sanctions at an early time, on grounds that it may force the DPRK into a corner.[16] Seoul had adopted a similar position to the Japanese government, fearing the unpredictable consequences of imposing sanctions. In contrast, the US had already contemplated economic sanctions at this early stage. By the end of March, United State's Secretary of State Christopher had actively considered imposing a trade embargo on energy sources.[17]

Despite these mixed responses to the referral of the issue to the Security Council, resolution 825 was adopted on May 12. The resolution called for the DPRK to reconsider its March 12 announcement, and to honour its obligations under the NPT and its safeguards agreement with the IAEA.[18] It was significant that China, despite its anti-sanctions stance, played a key role in the drafting of the resolution. It should be noted however, that the Chinese involvement led to the moderation of some of the language of the resolution.[19]

The adoption of the resolution prompted high level talks between the DPRK and the US, the first round of which was held from June 2-11 in New York. Despite an apparent lack of progress, on June 11 the DPRK announced a last minute decision to suspend its withdrawal from the NPT in return for agreements on the mutual non-use of nuclear

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[14] "State Department Confirms U.S.-DPRK Meeting", *FBIS-CHI-93-051*, 18 March 1993, p.1-2.

[15] K. Moeller & M. Tidten, "North Korea and the Bomb: Radicalisation in Isolation", op. cit., p.106; "Opposes UN Action", *FBIS-CHI-93-066*, 8 April 1993, p.1.

[16] "Japan Opposes 'Early Sanctions'" *FBIS-CHI-93-063*, 5 April 1993, p.9.

[17] K. Moeller & M. Tidten, "North Korea and the Bomb: Radicalisation in Isolation", op. cit., p.106.

[18] "Resolution Passed by the United Nations Security Council...", reprinted from *The Korea Herald*, 13 May 1993, p.5, in *Korea and World Affairs*, Summer 1993, pp.366-367.

[19] J. Cotton, "UN ups the pressure on North Korea", *The Canberra Times*, 14 May 1993, p.8. Significantly, China abstained during voting on the final resolution.

weapons, implementation of impartial safeguards, and mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs.[20] Further talks were held between July 4-19, in an atmosphere of considerable tension following President Clinton's threat to end North Korea's existence, should it use nuclear weapons.[21] At the conclusion of this series of talks, both sides agreed that considerable progress had been made towards the resolution of the issue. The DPRK agreed to undertake discussions with the IAEA and South Korea, while the US reaffirmed its commitment to the principle of non-use of nuclear weapons and threats against the DPRK, and offered to extend nuclear assistance to the DPRK in the form of light water reactors (LWR).[22] For its part however, the US refused to conduct further high level negotiations, until the DPRK had engaged in substantive talks with the IAEA.

By October the DPRK was claiming that it was unable to conduct negotiations with the IAEA. It argued that the IAEA was continuing to display forgery and partiality in its approach to the nuclear issue. The DPRK went on to stress that the US was the only nation with whom it would conduct negotiations.[23] The IAEA at this stage was remaining quite anxious over the refusal of the DPRK to allow its inspectors on to sites to replace batteries and film in monitoring equipment. The US however appeared to be unperturbed by the new developments, with one unidentified official stating that the length of time US negotiators had spent on the "precipice" had given them an ability to differentiate between "drama and histrionics from the bottom line."[24] The UN General Assembly stepped in again on November 1, when it passed a resolution (140 for; 1 against; 9 abstentions including China), calling on Pyongyang to comply with its safeguards agreement immediately.

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[20] E. Leopold, "NK Won't Pullout of Anti-Nuclear Pact for Now", *The New York Times*, 14 June 1993, p.5, cited in Y. Kim, "North Korea's Nuclear Program and Its Impact on Neighbouring Countries", *Korea and World Affairs*, Fall 1993, p.485.

[21] "'The End of Their Country': Clinton sends Pyongyang a tough message", *FEER*, 5 August 1993, p.5. It would appear that Clinton's comments were in part motivated by South Korean concerns that the US had been too lenient on the DPRK in the first round of high level talks.

[22] "US Offers Technical Help", *FBIS-CHI-93-137*, 20 July 1993, p.1. The production of weapons grade Plutonium from LWRs is extremely difficult when compared with the graphite moderated reactors of the DPRK. Given the long periods of time required for the construction of a LWR reactor, not to mention the difficulties likely to be experienced in obtaining Congressional approval for the export of such technology, it is unlikely that this offer would do much to placate the concerns over the DPRK's nuclear program.

[23] N. Chanda, "Bomb Cradle: North Korea manoeuvres to protect nuclear site", *FEER*, 28 October 1993, p.20.

[24] ibid., p.20.

The first sign of improvement in this impasse appeared on November 11, after a statement from the DPRK First Vice Minister Kang Sok Ju was broadcast. In the statement, Kang, who had been the leader of the DPRK delegations to the first and second high level discussions with the US, proposed the "formula of a package solution of the nuclear problem."[25] Included in the formula was a proposal that the DPRK ensure the continuity of safeguards while the DPRK-US negotiations continued. The situation improved further after a December 3 proposal by Ho Jong, deputy chief of the DPRK UN mission, to open some of the North's nuclear sites to the scrutiny of IAEA inspectors. Optimism reached an all-time high on December 29 after the DPRK and US agreed to reinstate routine and ad hoc inspections by the IAEA. The DPRK was eager to begin the third round of high level talks with the US, and so readily agreed to the inspection of all nuclear facilities, with the exception of the two undeclared sites.

The optimism quickly faded however, when it became apparent that the DPRK's definition of inspection proved to be grossly different from that of the IAEA. The DPRK maintained that it was neither wholly within nor out of the NPT, and therefore was entitled to allow only limited inspections that would verify that it was continuing to observe its safeguards agreement. In contrast the IAEA felt that only a complete and thorough inspection would determine the full extent of any diversion of nuclear materials to a weapons program.[26] The US was becoming increasingly impatient with the DPRK's 'on again, off again' approach, leading some analysts to call for a reappraisal of the 'carrot' approach. Democratic Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs Gary L. Ackermann, suggested in early January 1994, that the US should dispense with the "whiff of a carrot" approach in favour of showing the DPRK "the entire patch".[27] Clearly however, there were others in the Clinton administration who favoured sending a stronger message, as evidenced by discussions on the possibility of placing Patriot missile batteries along the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) at the end of January. This was coupled with reports

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[25] N. Chanda, "Fission Chips Down: US moves to defuse nuclear inspection crisis", *FEER*, 2 December 1993, p.16.
[26] N. Chanda, "Bomb and Bombast", *FEER*, 10 February 1994, pp.17.
[27] N. Chanda, ibid., p.18.

of US moves to strengthen its forces in the Northeast Asia region as part of a military plan to topple the Kim Il Sung regime.[28] The threatened deployment of the missiles was greeted with strong condemnation from the DPRK, which regarded it as further evidence of a hardening of the overall US position on the issue.[29]

Finally, on February 15 the DPRK agreed to allow IAEA representatives into North Korea to carry out inspections. The IAEA announced on February 25 that these inspections would be carried out before the beginning of March. The IAEA undertook inspections of seven nuclear facilities between March 1-15. Initially the inspections appeared to be proceeding smoothly, however, the IAEA representatives were prevented from undertaking crucial smear tests on equipment in a room suspected of being used to extract plutonium. On March 21 despite renewed DPRK threats to withdraw from the NPT, the IAEA decided to refer the situation back to the UN security council. The situation became very tense after inter-Korean talks in Panmunjon broke down with North Korean delegate Park Yong Su threatening to turn Seoul into a "sea of fire" if war broke out.[30]

On March 31, the UN Security Council adopted a Presidential statement that urged the DPRK to allow full inspections of its nuclear facilities. The issuing of the statement represented something of a disappointment for the Clinton administration, which had been hoping for a stronger resolution including the threat of sanctions. Pressure brought about by China's stance against sanctions ensured that no such clause could be included in the statement.[31] Subsequently, the US decided to deploy Patriot missile batteries in early April, and continued to arrange for the rescheduling of the 'Team Spirit' exercises. These actions were intended to send a clear message to Pyongyang, warning it against its nuclear course.

A chief concern of the IAEA and the US was the scheduled refuelling of the 5MW reactor at Yongbyon, due to take place during May 1994. The IAEA insisted that it be

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[28] *International Herald Tribune*, 7 February 1994, pp.1 & 6, cited in "Pyongyang and Washington vs. the IAEA", *North Korea Quarterly*, nos.69-70, Summer-Fall 1993, p.17.

[29] ibid., pp.16-17. The discussions of the threatened Patriot deployment were later placed on hold until after the IAEA meeting of February 21.

[30] "A 'Sea of Fire?': North Korean Bombast, But Can the Bombs Be Far Behind?", *Asiaweek*, 6 April 1994, p.25.

[31] "China says No to Move Against Pyongyang", *The Daily Telegraph*, Reuter Australasian Briefing, 2 April 1994.

present at the refuelling in order to ensure that the procedure was carried out in accordance with the safeguards agreement. Initially there was some optimism that the inspections may take place, leading South Korean President Kim Young Sam to say that he felt it was "difficult to say there [was] a crisis on the Korean peninsula now".[32] President Clinton reflected this sentiment when he authorised the continuation of high level talks with the DPRK, after the IAEA instructed US officials that it had no reason to suspect any of the spent fuel had been diverted to a weapons program.[33] The DPRK however refused to allow inspectors, who were in North Korea for the refuelling, to carry out adequate tests. In particular the inspectors were prevented from taking adequate samples from the spent fuel rods, a procedure that would have ensured a more comprehensive understanding of the extent of the North's plutonium development. It was believed that there was sufficient plutonium available in the spent fuel to make four or five nuclear weapons.[34]

The impasse lead President Clinton to say that it was now imperative that the UN consider the imposition of sanctions against the Kim Il Sung regime. In reality, however, the US faced an uphill battle in obtaining any significant discussion of the issue, particularly given China's staunch opposition to the imposition of sanctions.[35]

Little progress was made in resolving the impasse until late June, when Jimmy Carter undertook a self-assigned peace mission to the Korean peninsula. The former US president held meetings with both South and North Korean leaders, and managed to extract significant assurances from Kim Il Sung on the future of the DPRK nuclear program. In particular, Carter managed to obtain a guarantee from the 'Great Leader' that the North would freeze its nuclear program and submit its nuclear facilities to international inspection. Kim went further, offering to meet with ROK President Kim Young Sam, the first such meeting since the division of the peninsula forty-nine years previously.[36] Much of

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[32] B. Powell, "Back to the Brink?", *Newsweek*, in *The Bulletin*, 7 June 1994, p.50.

[33] K. Fedarko, "Pushing It to the Limit", *Time*, 30 May 1994, p.40.

[34] It is believed by some in the CIA that sufficient plutonium for one or two weapons was made available by the removal of fuel rods from the reactor at Yongbyon when it was shut down for 100 days in 1989. ibid., p.40

[35] B. Nelan, "Down The Risky Path", *Time*, 13 June 1994.

[36] K. Breslau, "A Stooge or a Saviour?", *Newsweek*, in *The Bulletin*, 28 June 1994, p.58.

the Clinton Administration was deeply sceptical over the Carter initiative, claiming that the offers made by Kim Il Sung were little more than a repeat of the delaying tactics used in the past.[37] Reactions from regional nations differed greatly from that of the more conservative elements of the Clinton administration. South Korea, Japan and China all welcomed the Carter initiative.

Before the sincerity of Kim Il Sung's offers could be tested, however, the 'Great Leader' passed away on July 8. North Korea closed its borders and mourned in isolation. While initial reports suggested that Kim Jong Il had managed to take hold of the reins of power in the world's first socialist dynastic succession, the implications of this for the nuclear weapons issue were initially unclear. The poor level of information on Kim junior produced many conflicting images of the leader, ranging from fanatical despot to technologically minded moderate, none of which gave concrete indications of the direction he might take the negotiations.

When the negotiations between the US and the DPRK resumed in early August, they did so in an air of uncertainty. This changed however, when on August 13 the US and the DPRK signed an agreement in principle aimed at settling the nuclear dispute. The agreement centred around the provision of LWR nuclear technology and US diplomatic recognition of the DPRK in return for a freeze on the operation and construction of North Korea's current graphite moderated reactors, and observation of the NPT and its obligations under its safeguards agreement with the IAEA.[38] United States' optimism surrounding the agreement was short lived however, as demonstrated by the North's refusal to accept South Korean involvement in the construction of the light water reactors.[39]

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[37] President Clinton has never been close to former President Carter, which may suggest part of the administration's reluctance to support the Carter initiative. A particular sore point was Carter's offer to ensure that the US would drop any intention to adopt sanctions. Said one Clinton aide; "Carter misstated...He didn't know what he was talking about." ibid., pp.58-59.

[38] Although it agreed to forgo the development of indigenous graphite reactors, the DPRK failed to give assurances on the 8,000 spent fuel rods, insisting that they remain in the cooling pond in which they were placed in May. Furthermore the DPRK negotiators had failed to give assurances that they would agree to allow the special inspections at the heart of the dispute to go ahead. For its part, the US took the North's decision to adhere to its safeguards agreement as a sign that it would allow the inspections to take place. P. Naughton, "Deal on N. Korea reactors", *The Canberra Times*, 14 August 1994, p.1; N. Holloway & J. Shim, "The Price of Peace", *FEER*, 25 August 1994, pp.14-15.

[39] The refusal of the DPRK to allow the ROK to become involved in the provision of the LWR technology is a major blow to the US. Given that the costs of the aid package are estimated to be in the order of $US4 billion, the US is

Following breakdown of the August agreement, a new round of negotiations was held during October. This culminated in the signing of an accord to settle the issue between North Korea and the US on October 21. Under the agreement, the US would agree to supply the DPRK with two 1000 MW light water reactors, in return for the freezing of the North's nuclear program and the opening of key facilities to IAEA inspectors. The US would also agree to supply the DPRK with sufficient crude oil to meet its energy needs until the construction of the first reactor had been completed. The two nations agreed to undertake steps toward mutual recognition. The North also promised to reopen the inter-Korean dialogue.

Despite the initial US optimism that surrounded this agreement, considerable questions remained unanswered. Specifically, the timing of the IAEA inspections remained ambiguous, with reports suggesting that the North had obtained permission under the accord to delay all inspections until the construction of the first reactor was complete, a process that might take at least five years.[40] Furthermore the agreement faced considerable obstacles from domestic parliaments in the US, Japan and South Korea.[41] Key Republican members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee have attacked the accord for its concessionary stance.[42] The cost of the accord has been foremost in the concerns raised by those opposed to the agreement. It was estimated that the cost to the South Korean economy could be as high as US$6 billion, or approximately US$140 for every South Korean citizen.[43] Finally, there exists a concern that the North will renege on its agreements as it has done so in the past.

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unlikely to find other partners willing to get involved as the South had been prepared to do. "S. Korea threat to reactor deal", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 August 1994, p.13.

[40] Japan: "Pact Between North Korea and U.S. Leaves Crucial Points Unclear" *Nikkei Weekly*, 24 October 1994, Reuter Australasian Briefing, 24 October 1994.

[41] ibid., pp.14-15; "Deal With North Korea Sparks Senate Anger", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 October 1994, p.9.

[42] In anticipation of a hostile Congress and Senate following the Congressional elections on November 8, President Clinton will attempt to have the reactors built without US money, technology, or assistance, thus removing the need for Congressional approval. Despite these attempts, much of the technology for the reactors will have to come from the US, even if such technology is given to the North by "retransfer" from South Korea, thus necessitating Congressional approval. "Deal With North Korea Sparks Senate Anger", ibid., p.9; J. Shim & N. Holloway, "Hold the Champagne", op. cit., p.15; "Republicans may bar N Korea deal", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 November 1994, p.12.

[43] J. Shim & N. Holloway, "Hold the Champagne", op. cit., p.15.

US attempts to secure nuclear guarantees from the DPRK continued to be surrounded by speculation and doubt, raising a string of questions concerning the efficacy of the US approach to the nuclear issue. In particular, why has the focus of US strategy during the crisis been on the use of negotiations rather than threats, and why have these negotiations found it so difficult to obtain the cessation of the DPRK nuclear program?

The US has had little option in its approach to the nuclear issue other than to adopt a position that places the emphasis on negotiations and the offer of incentives. The option of threats, either in the form of military operations or economic sanctions, has never been seen to be a truly viable option. Military threats, and or operations, are perceived to have been of the least value in finding a solution to the nuclear issue. Military strikes against the DPRK's nuclear facility, such as that carried out by Israel against a similar installation in Iraq, have essentially been discounted by most observers as too dangerous. Unlike the Iraqi installation, the DPRK facility at Yongbyon is operational, thus making it likely that any military strike on this facility would result in a massive release of radioactive material, that would not only affect the DPRK, but also the surrounding region.[44]

Apart from the obvious environmental consequences of a military strike on the facilities at Yongbyon, it is highly probable that such an attack would result in large scale conflict on the peninsula. Fear of such a conflict remains high throughout the region, as evidenced by South Korean and Japanese efforts to dissuade the US from considering a military option. Despite ROK superiority in terms of military quality, the DPRK maintains the world's fourth largest land army, much of which is situated along the DMZ within 40 miles of Seoul. This land based threat is further enhanced by the North's considerable arsenal of Scud B and C class missiles, which are easily capable of hitting industrial targets throughout the ROK. These Scuds are more sophisticated, and would have far shorter flight times to the ROK than those employed by the Iraqis against Israel during the Gulf War. This would make the task of shooting these missiles down very difficult, if not impossible

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[44] N. Chanda, "Great Leader's Gambit: Pyongyang set for nuclear talks with US", *FEER*, 3 June 1993, p.12.

for US Patriot missile batteries based on the DMZ.[45] There can be little doubt that a military conflict on the peninsula would wreak havoc on the ROK economy, and would almost certainly ruin much of its industrial infrastructure.[46] In addition to this, it is likely that a military operation against the DPRK would almost certainly reinforce the North's perceived need for a nuclear deterrent.

The US has also been unable to utilise the threat of economic sanctions in its approach to the nuclear issue. In the first instance, the efficacy of economic sanctions is highly questionable. As the Iraqi case has demonstrated, the consequences of economic sanctions are inevitably borne by the wider population rather than the targeted leadership. There is a possibility that economic sanctions would have an effect on the flow of money from the pro-Pyongyang ethnic Korean community (*chosen soren*) in Japan.[47] In consideration of sanctions, however, the Japanese government would have to take into account the well being of ethnic Japanese who returned to North Korea with their Korean spouses during the 1950s, and constitutional limitations on the role of Japanese warships in an economic blockade. Even if the Japanese government were to impose financial sanctions, it is doubtful that they would be effective. The *chosen soren* could easily ship the money to North Korea via Hong Kong or China should the direct link be cut off.[48]

The effectiveness of sanctions is drawn further into doubt after consideration of North Korea's trading pattern. The DPRK conducts very limited external trade, most of which is in the form of border trade with China, and limited exchanges of missile technology for oil with Iran. The North's trade relationship with China is vital for its survival. Cross border trade between the two nations supplies the DPRK with 72% of its food imports, 75% of oil imports, and 66% of its coking coal needs for steel production.[49] Despite the high level of

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[45] Recent developments in DPRK missile technology have now placed western Japan within range, including the industrial centre of Osaka. Mounting evidence is also suggesting that the DPRK is developing missiles with a range of up to 3500 km. M. Elliott & J. Barry, "Nothing Short of Doomsday", *Newsweek*, in *The Bulletin*, 5 July, 1994, p.56; "Japan Reports Test Launching of North Korean Missile", *BBC SWB*, 12 June 1993, p.C2/1; B. Starr, "N Korea casts a longer shadow with TD-2", *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 12 March 1994, p.1.

[46] *Asian Security 1993-1994*, op. cit., p.33.

[47] C. Smith, "Ifs and Buts of Sanctions", *FEER*, 16 June 1994, p.16.

[48] ibid., p.16.

[49] E. Paisley, "Prepared for The Worst", *FEER*, 10 February 1994, pp.22-23.

decentralisation in the Chinese economy, it is likely that Beijing would be able to stop much of this trade if it wanted to, although the possibility of continued low level trade might remain. It is highly questionable whether Beijing would support the imposition of sanctions in any case. Chinese leaders have repeatedly condemned the possibility of discussions on economic sanctions at the UN Security Council. The prospect of a Chinese veto on sanctions is a situation that neither the US negotiators, nor the besieged Clinton administration can afford.

In view of the limitations of threats, the US has turned to the provision of incentives as the chief means of extracting the nuclear guarantees from the DPRK it desires. Initial incentives were centred on the establishment of high level negotiations between the DPRK and the US. As detailed in the above account, these discussions have occurred, yet the limited success they have brought to the US has prompted the officials to present offers of further incentives. These have included economic assistance, the establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and the DPRK, the possibility of inter-Korean talks at a Presidential level, and most recently, offers of LWR technology. While it would seem that for the immediate term the combination of these incentives has been sufficient to secure a freeze on nuclear development in North Korea, some doubts do remain. As already indicated, despite the North's agreement to place a freeze on its nuclear development program, questions regarding future inspections at key nuclear facilities and existing supplies of weapons grade material have been pushed into the distance.

The fact that these doubts surrounding the future of the North Korean nuclear program remain would tend to suggest that the US approach to the issue has failed to address the chief concerns that have motivated the DPRK nuclear program. If the sole rationale for the possession of nuclear weapons had been one of addressing the North's strategic concerns, one would have expected some headway to have been made following the suspension of the 'Team Spirit' exercises and the withdrawal of US nuclear weapons from South Korea. This has clearly not been the case. Likewise, it is insufficient to argue that the nuclear program is an attempt by the DPRK to secure economic guarantees alone.

Despite earlier offers of LWR technology, the North refused to stand by its agreements with the US. It has only been when the US has concurrently offered the opportunity for mutual diplomatic recognition that the DPRK has signed any agreements. This fact alone would suggest that the DPRK rationale for nuclear weapons is based on more than geo-strategic or economic concerns. If this is the case, then a more accurate understanding of the rationale behind the North Korean nuclear program is required if the US is to ensure that it has secured the future of non-proliferation in Northeast Asia. An in depth examination of this rationale is therefore to be the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

NORTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR SEARCH FOR STATE AND REGIME LEGITIMACY.

Despite the end of the Cold War, the Korean Peninsula remains the paramount source of tension in the Northeast Asia region. The current nuclear crisis that confronts the region has done little to dispel this image. Tensions on either side of the Demilitarised Zone remain frozen in the unresolved hostilities of the Korean War. In consideration of these circumstances it would be easy to conclude that the sole motivation behind the DPRK nuclear program is maintaining a firm deterrence against South Korean aggression. Such an analysis however, ignores the fundamental changes in the internal and external situation of the DPRK that have occurred since the end of the Cold War, and even as far back as the early 1970s. North Korea's economic and military superiority over the ROK has long since receded, the technological and economic might of the South now far surpassing that of the DPRK. Kim Il Sung's autocratic philosophy of *Juche* (literally self reliance), has failed to bring the DPRK the economic and military success that Kim promised it would, and North Korea now flounders in a state of near total economic collapse. Most significantly for the DPRK however, has been the collapse and restructuring of socialism throughout the world. The effect of this dramatic transformation of world communism has been to isolate the DPRK in a state of acute identity and legitimacy crisis, in which the guiding definitions of the past are no longer suitable for continued state or regime existence. Despite the difficulties of accurately assessing the rationales of such an isolated state as the DPRK, this chapter argues that an assessment of the DPRK rationale for nuclear weapons is most effectively explained within the context of this acute national identity and legitimacy crisis.

It is not being argued here that geo-strategic concerns have not and do not play a part in the make up of the DPRK nuclear weapons rationale. It is most likely, given the age of the North Korean nuclear weapons program as put forward in the previous chapter, that the

initial rationale for the acquisition of nuclear weapons was embedded firmly in the strategic interests of the emerging Kim Il Sung regime. The experiences of the Korean War, and the hostile atmosphere of frequent verbal threats from the US that characterised the early post war years, would almost certainly have heightened perceived need for a strong military capability, that may have included nuclear weapons.[1] North Korean need for an indigenous nuclear capability would have also been encouraged by Kim Il Sung's philosophy of *Juche*. Perhaps the most significant strategic incentive for the acquisition of nuclear weapons, however, would have been the threat of a South Korean weapon. Although the ROK abandoned its attempts to construct a nuclear weapon in March 1975, after considerable pressure from the US, the DPRK stepped up its own nuclear efforts, as evidenced by the surge in the construction of nuclear facilities during the 1980s.[2]

More recently, the shifting military balance on the peninsula has been cited as the fundamental factor in the North Korean rationale for acquiring nuclear weapons. The military capacity of the DPRK has been in steady decline since the end of military support from the former Soviet Union, and China's refusal to continue to export military hardware to its Northern ally. The military superiority the North once enjoyed, is now rapidly fading, as economic power in South Korea has placed it in a military position equal, if not superior to the North in many aspects.[3] Furthermore, the dire economic circumstances in the North make the costs of maintaining its large army difficult to maintain. It is estimated that the North spends about 22.4% of its GNP on its defence forces. This stands in stark contrast to the ROK, which spends 3.8% of its much larger GNP. In 1991 US dollar values, the North Korean defence expenditure amounted to US$5.13 billion, in contrast to the ROK's defence

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[1] J. Bermudez, "North Korea's Nuclear Program", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 1991, pp.404-405.

[2] P. Hayes, "The Republic of Korea and the Nuclear Issue", in A. Mack (ed.), *Asian Flashpoint: Security and the Korean Peninsula*, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, 1993, p.52.

[3] Although the North continues to maintain an army that is one of the world's seven largest in terms of manpower, much of its technical equipment and logistic capabilities are inferior to that of the ROK. N. Erbestadt, & J. Banister, "Military Buildup in the DPRK", *Asian Survey*, vol.31 no.11, November 1991; Y. Song, *The Korean Nuclear Issue*, Working Paper 1991/10, Dept. of International Relations, Australian National University (ANU), Canberra 1991, p.4; P. Hayes, *Moving Target - Korea's Nuclear Proliferation Potential*, Canberra, Department of International Relations Working Paper no.1992/5, Australian National University, 1992, p.3.

expenditure of US$10.59 billion.[4] While on the surface, a nuclear weapons program may seem costly, in reality it would represent a low cost solution to the declining military position of the North. In terms of 1986 monetary values, a plutonium bomb would cost in the order of US$470 million, or an average yearly expenditure of US$30 million over eight years. This amounts to approximately 1% of North Korean defence expenditure during 1991.[5]

There are key limitations to the effectiveness and accuracy of an explanation of the DPRK nuclear program solely in terms of addressing geo-strategic concerns. While the development of a nuclear deterrent may give the North a strategic advantage initially, it is unlikely that it would enjoy such advantage for very long. It is highly probable that firm evidence of a North Korean bomb would provoke the ROK and Japan into developing their own nuclear deterrent.[6] Furthermore, given the limited technological ability of the DPRK, it is highly unlikely that the regime has a short term ability to place a nuclear device into a deliverable package for one of its Scud or Nodong class of missiles. Due to these technical problems, it is likely that the sphere of operation for a North Korean nuclear device would be limited to the Korean peninsula.[7] This being the case, it is questionable whether the North would opt to use a nuclear weapon against the ROK, particularly given that it regards the South as part of its own territory.[8] Such reluctance would have been further emphasised by the statements of former US President Bush, who assured the ROK government that the removal of tactical nuclear weapons from the South at the end of 1991 did not mean a

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[4] Statistical estimates from the Bank of Korea, quoted in *Newsreview*, 22 August 1992, and cited in S. Kim, "China's Korea Policy in a Changing Regional and Global Order", *China Information*, vol.8 nos.1/2, p.84.

[5] Y. Song, "North Korea's Potential to Develop Nuclear Weapons", *Vantage Point*, vol.14 no.8, August 1991, p.8.

[6] R. Shinn, "North Korea: Squaring Reality with Orthodoxy", in D. Clarke (ed.), *Korea Briefing 1991*, Boulder, Westview Press, 1991, p.102; "A Bomb for All?", *Asiaweek*, 7 April 1993, p.25.

[7] W. Martel, & W. Pendley, *Nuclear Coexistence: Rethinking U.S. Policy to promote Stability in an Era of Proliferation*, Air War College Studies in National Security No.1, Air University, Montgomery, April 1994, p.88. Yossef Bodansky has argued that North Korea already possess the ability to deliver 50 kt warheads to Japanese targets using its existing missiles. Y. Bodansky, "The North Korean Nuclear Arsenal Is Deployed, Despite Face-Saving Agreements With the US", *Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 31 July 1994, pp7-10. For an examination of North Korean military options in the event of conflict on the Korean Peninsula, refer to K. Brower, "North Korean Proliferation: The Threat to the New World Order", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, August 1994.

[8] J. Cotton, "North Korea's Nuclear Ambitions", *Adelphi*, no.275, 1993, p.96. There is also the possibility that a North Korean nuclear strike on the South may induce a response in kind from the US.

withdrawal of the US nuclear umbrella from the ROK.[9] Given this statement, the DPRK leadership must be aware that a nuclear attack on the South could possibly result in a response in kind from the US.

It is most likely that the DPRK leadership is aware of the limitations of a nuclear weapon for addressing its security problems, making it unlikely that the sole rationale behind its nuclear weapons program is the consideration of strategic interests. The pattern of negotiations that was described in the previous chapter would tend to suggest that the DPRK is considering far more than strategic principles in its approach to the nuclear crisis. This is further emphasised by the evidence that suggests the range of dilemmas now facing the DPRK have outgrown simplistic geo-strategic concerns. North Korea's governing party, the Korean Workers' Party (KWP), has entered the post-Cold War period in a state of acute legitimacy crisis. At a time of constant declining parity with the ROK, the DPRK leadership has been confronted with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the revision and transformation of communism in China, and a growing domestic economic crisis. In short, the DPRK is suffering under the twin blows of an external legitimacy crisis due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and an internal or regime crisis because of the deteriorating economic state of the nation.

At the centre of this legitimacy crisis lies Kim Il Sung's governing philosophy of *Juche*. The origins of *Juche* are found in Kim Il Sung's *Yuil Sasang* (unitarism), a campaign undertaken by Kim to enhance his legitimacy and secure control over North Korea. Kim's reluctance to offend either the Soviet Union or China during the tense years of the Sino-Soviet dispute, resulted in the modification of *Yuil Sasang* into the philosophy of *Juche*.[10] Owing more to Kim's own experiences during the years of Yenan and anti-Japanese struggles than to Marxism and Leninism, *Juche* has become the basis of North Korean state operation and KWP legitimacy. Yet as the basis of state and regime legitimacy, *Juche* is proving to be increasingly unreliable, despite comments such as those

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[9] A. Mack, "The Nuclear Crisis on the Korean Peninsula", *Asian Survey*, vol.33 no.4, April 1993.

[10] H. Park, "*Chuch'e*: The North Korean Ideology", in C. Kim & B. Koh (eds.), *Journey to North Korea: Personal Perceptions*, Institute of East Asian Studies, Berkeley, 1983, p.85.

made by DPRK vice president Yi Jong Ok during an address prior to Kim Il Sung's eightieth birthday:

> The nation, which a number of foreign friends, renowned figures and revolutionary people of the world unanimously praise as the nation whose ideology, politics and social system are the best, whose unity and construction are exemplary and whose education and public health are superior, is the very *Juche* Korea, our fatherland.[11]

The irony of this statement is difficult to ignore. At no other time has either the DPRK been as isolated, and as economically dysfunctional, or the KWP as politically illegitimate, as they are now. The DPRK is suffering from an external legitimacy crisis of unprecedented magnitude, brought about not only by the collapse of its communist brethren, but also by its own economic incompetence. The international legitimacy of the North Korean state has been dealt a severe blow by the unprecedented success of the authoritarian capitalist model of economic development that has made South Korea the economic power it is today. As a basis of economic operation, *Juche* has been totally inefficient. Although economic operation under the banner of *Juche* was initially successful, in recent years it has failed to keep pace with the economic 'miracle' of South Korea. While few concrete figures concerning the North Korean economy are to be found, there is little doubt that the North Korean economy is in a state of crisis. South Korean estimates paint a picture of an economy that has been in constant decline during the years 1990-92. It is believed that the annual North Korean GNP declined in 1990 by 3.7%, 5.2% in 1991, and 7.6% in 1992.[12] South Korean estimates have further suggested that the per capita income of North Korea has declined over a similar period by as much as 50% to around US$800.[13] National debt has increased dramatically to be US$6 billion in 1989.[14]

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[11] *BBC, Summary of World Broadcasts* (SWB), FE/1431, B/10, 13 July 1992, in J. Cotton, "North Korea's Nuclear Ambitions", *Adelphi*, no.275, March 1993, p.97.

[12] Research Institute for Peace and Security, Tokyo, *Asian Security 1993-1994*, London, Brassey's, 1993, pp.157-158.

[13] K. Moeller, & M. Tidten, "North Korea and the Bomb: Radicalisation in Isolation", op. cit., p.100.

[14] *Survey of North Korean Economy*, National Unification Board, Seoul, 1989, cited in E. Hwang, *The Korean Economies: A Comparison of North and South*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1993, p.198.

This debt has been further compounded by Chinese and Russian insistence on hard currency based trade. Although China has maintained a delivery of 550,000 tonnes of crude oil on a credit basis, it is unclear for how long even this limited supply will continue, particularly given the repeated Chinese threats to suspend all barter trade (see following chapter for a full account of Sino-DPRK economic relations). The low levels of fuel make it very difficult for industry to operate. One report has estimated that the total proportion of idle industry in North Korea may be as high as 40%.[15]

Clearly the North Korean economy is in deep trouble, and in desperate need of reform and foreign aid. Not only does the dire economic circumstance of the DPRK affect its legitimacy as a state, but it also poses significant questions for the legitimacy of the ruling regime and its guiding principles of *Juche*. In view of this potential threat to the legitimacy of the ruling regime, the KWP has undertaken limited steps toward economic reform. In particular it adopted several constitutional reforms to remove some of the constraints on foreign investment and joint ventures.[16] The government has also shifted attention to the creation of a large contract manufacturing sector, specialising in labour intensive value-added manufactures.[17] The DPRK leadership is reluctant however, to accept wholesale assistance for fear that it will undermine the *Juche* foundations of its legitimacy. It is hardly surprising that the highest echelons of the DPRK are troubled by this dilemma. As the experience of China demonstrates so effectively to the DPRK, foreign economic assistance is very much a poisoned chalice. Economic assistance and investment does not proceed in a vacuum. With it comes new information and ideas, and most importantly the knowledge that North Korea under *Juche* is not the 'paradise on earth' it is claimed to be.

Most significantly, the interaction of North Koreans with the ideas and knowledge of the outside world has the potential to reveal the extent of North Korea's post-Cold War isolation. The effect of this isolation on the external legitimacy of the DPRK has already

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[15] B. Gill, "North Korea and the Crisis of Socialism", *Third World Quarterly*, vol.13 no.1, 1992, cited in, A. Mack, "The Nuclear Crisis on the Korean Peninsular", op. cit., p.347.

[16] *Asian Security 1993-1994*, op. cit., p.155. In recent weeks it has been revealed that the DPRK has asked South Korean conglomerate Lucky Goldstar to take over the operation of its largest steelworks. *The Economist*, 22 October 1994.

[17] J. Merril, "North Korea in 1993: In the Eye of the Storm", *Asian Survey*, vol.34 no.1, January 1994, p.16.

been suggested, however, it is clear that these events would also have an effect on the internal legitimacy of the regime. The knowledge of the sudden and often violent fall of East European communism, particularly the demise and summary execution of the Nicolai Ceaucescu regime in Romania, would place great questions on the legitimacy of the Kim regime in the minds of the people. The evidence of the 1992 constitutional changes suggests that the ruling KWP is aware of the implications of the collapse of East European communism for its own identity and legitimacy as a ruling socialist party. The extent to which these states were once a key legitimising force for the KWP is reflected by the rapidity with which the DPRK removed all references to Marxism and Leninism from its 1972 constitution during the Third Supreme People's Congress in April 1992. The description of *Juche* as an adaptation of the principles of Marxism and Leninism, the failings of which had been cited as the fundamental cause of the collapse of communism, was altered. The constitutional definition of *Juche* became one in which the Great Leader's philosophy was a revolutionary ideology based on humanism, its ultimate goal being the achievement of the people's autonomy.[18] To have acknowledged any similarities between the failed communist states and the DPRK would have been to concede the presence of weaknesses in North Korea's own system.

North Korea's isolation, brought about by the collapse of the Communist Bloc has been further emphasised by the ROK's successful strategy of Northern Diplomacy or Nordpolitik. Under President Roh Tae Woo, South Korea undertook a diplomatic strategy of isolating North Korea from its traditional allies. Using trade incentives as the principle tool, the South Korean government has been able to obtain diplomatic recognition from the two nations that have traditionally been closest to the DPRK, namely China and the former Soviet Union (now continued by Russia).[19] It is not difficult to see why the Soviet Union undertook the offer of mutual diplomatic recognition with the ROK. Relations between the

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[18] *Asian Security 1993-1994*, op. cit., p.156.

[19] The strategy of Nordpolitik was begun by ROK President Roh Tae Woo. Upon the establishment of the ROK embassy in Beijing he told his country that the "last external constraint" on peaceful reunification had been removed. H. Liu, "The Sino-South Korean Normalisation: A Triangular Explanation", *Asian Survey*, vol.33 no.11, November 1993, p.1087; B. Bridges, *Japan and Korea in the 1990s*, Aldershot, Edward Elgar Publishing, 1993, pp.67-72.

Soviet Union and the DPRK had developed out of mutual convenience rather than mutual respect. Soviet interests in maintaining relations were based firmly on its perception of the need to have the North as a strategic counterweight to China. After Sino-Soviet tensions dissipated toward the end of the 1980s, and the economic and technological offers of the South became too tempting, the Soviet Union moved to establish ties with the ROK.[20] Similarly, China found the economic gains to be had with the ROK to be sufficient enticement for it to establish diplomatic relations. China is now one of the most significant destinations for South Korean foreign investment, and total trade between the two nations amounts to more than $US9 billion.[21] In both cases, neither the Soviet Union nor China wanted to risk being dragged into a conflict on the Korean peninsula, in which success would be extremely unlikely.[22]

In this isolated state of near economic collapse, it would appear that the Kim regime has turned to its nuclear program as the best available means with which to secure its own legitimacy, and that of the North Korean state. The emphasis on the role of nuclear weapons in securing the future of the state and the regime was clearly reflected in comments by Kim Jong Il following the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the ROK:

> Now Russia is unreliable, and China is also becoming unreliable. We must rely on ourselves. First we must rely on the spiritual atom bomb: Kim Il-song's predominant idea:...[*Juche*]...; second, we must rely upon the material atom bomb: the atom bombs and Labor 3 guided missiles which are being produced.[23]

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[20] P. Meyer, "Gorbachev and Post-Gorbachev Policy Toward The Korean Peninsula: The Impact of Changing Perceptions", *Asian Survey*, vol.32 no.8, August 1992, pp757-772.

[21] See following chapter for a more thorough examination of Chinese trade relations with the DPRK and the ROK. *Direction of Trade Statistics*, March & December 1993; D. Wu, "*Zhonghan Jingji Guanxi Wenbu De Fazhan*" (Chinese-South Korean Trade Relationship Develops Steadily", *Guoji Maoyi* (International Trade), no.10, 1992, p.49. "A Bomb for All?", *Asiaweek*, 7 April 1993, pp.24-25.

[22] Y. Park, "Will North Korea Survive the Current Crisis? A Political Economy Perspective", *The Korean Journal of National Unification*, vol.2, 1993, pp.110-111.

[23] "Article Views Sino-US Trade, DPRK Ties", (*Xin Bao*, 7 May 1993), *FBIS-CHI-93-088*, 10 May 1993, p.2.

Such an attitude would tend to suggest that Kim Jong Il, and perhaps other members of the leadership, perceive the possession of nuclear weapons as the only means by which the North can obtain economic assistance on its own terms, without cost to the *Juche* foundations of its legitimacy. Such thinking is inherently flawed however, and the evidence of the 'on again, off again' approach to the nuclear negotiations, suggests that the North Korean leadership is aware of this. Possession of nuclear weapons, real or imagined, may very well bring to the DPRK the economic assistance and international recognition it desires, but it will do so at great cost to the legitimacy of the *Juche* system upon which the legitimacy of the regime itself is based.

Given this dilemma, it is not immediately clear how the DPRK leadership expects the nuclear program to assist it in its struggle to regain the legitimacy of the state and the regime. While the threat of such weapons may go some way to securing the state's legitimacy and existence, they concurrently pose significant obstacles to the economic assistance and investment the regime requires for its own legitimacy and long term survival.[24] In the short term, the legitimacy requirements of the state have been served by the conduct of high level negotiations with the United States. The DPRK craves international recognition, as evidenced by Yi Jong-ok's statement cited above. The negotiations with the US have, at least in the minds of the North Korean leaders, returned it to a position of prominence on the world stage, at a time when it had largely been marginalised by the end of the Cold War. Such negotiations can only serve to enhance the legitimacy of the state, and in turn go some way to improving the legitimacy of the regime.[25]

In the longer term however, the benefits of a nuclear weapons program to the legitimacy and survival of the regime are questionable. If the threat of nuclear weapons does bring the economic bounty the KWP is seeking, it may, as already suggested,

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[24] Despite the recent agreement, much of the economic and technical aid that is to result from its signing will not arrive in North Korea without adequate guarantees on the status of the DPRK nuclear program.

[25] J. Cotton, "North Korea's Nuclear Ambitions", op. cit., p.97. The benefits to state and regime legitimacy from diplomatic recognition by the US may have been the ultimate incentive that lead the DPRK to sign the accord of October 21.

irreversibly undermine the *Juche* foundations of its legitimacy. In any event, the use of the nuclear threat to secure foreign economic assistance is highly problematical. Despite the recent agreement on the delivery of light water reactors, the US is still far from delivering such technology. As already suggested in the previous chapter, there remains the problem of Congressional approval, not to mention the matter of who will pay for the project. Furthermore it is unlikely that many western corporations will be keen to invest in a nation which lacks an efficient infrastructure and whose political and economic future remains uncertain.[26] Already there is evidence that suggests some of the *Chosen Soren* joint venture companies have folded due to problems with Pyongyang failing to fulfil contracts.[27] These investment problems do not bode well for the economic future of the DPRK. Under the present conditions it is unlikely that the DPRK will receive any of the US$30 billion required for the successful operation of the Tumen River development scheme.[28] Ultimately, if it is to secure the economic assistance it requires, the DPRK will either have to abandon its nuclear program, or at least deceive the US and the IAEA into thinking that the program has been abandoned.

This may indeed be the ultimate goal of the North. The pattern of negotiation so far adopted by the DPRK in its discussions with the US, suggests that it may be stalling for time so as to allow for the completion of a nuclear weapon. The recent agreement appears to allow the DPRK the right to refuse inspections of key facilities until the completion of the first light water reactor. This would amount to a period of at least five years, ample time in which the DPRK might seek to develop a nuclear weapon. For Kim Jong Il, the nuclear crisis offers the opportunity for him to secure his legitimacy with the Korean People's Army (KPA) and rival elements within the KWP.[29] Unlike Kim Il Sung, whose

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[26] T. North, "The Kim Jong-Il Succession Problem in the Context of the North Korean Political Structure", *Korea and World Affairs*, Spring 1992, p.45. It should be pointed out that much of the foreign interest in North Korea comes from the South Korean *Chaebol*, many of which are already organised for investment in the DPRK. S. Strasser, "Buying the Enemy Out", *Newsweek*, in *The Bulletin*, 1 November 1994, pp.58-59..

[27] J. Merril, "North Korea in 1993...", op. cit., p.16.

[28] See next chapter for a more detailed account of this development project.

[29] In particular Kim must secure his position from rival family members. Most notable among these are Kim Song Ae (Kim Il Sung's widow), and Kim Jong Il's uncle , Kim Yong Ju. Both rivals were placed near the bottom of the mourners' list for ceremonies commemorating Kim Il Sung. J. Shim, "Lethal Legacy", *FEER*, p.15; S. Strasser, "A Bridge of No Return", *Newsweek*, in *The Bulletin*, 26 July 1994, p.49.

authority and legitimacy were based on his own charisma, Kim Jong Il will be judged by his ability to achieve results.[30] The fundamental task for Kim Jong Il, as suggested earlier is that of resolving the conflict between the dictates of theory and the dictates of economic necessity. Kim is in an unenviable position with regard to this task. As the sole legitimate heir to Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il possesses the authority that will enable him to undertake reform. Yet it is this close linkage with Kim Il Sung and *Juche* that will concurrently prevent him from doing so. Kim Jong Il's own legitimacy is closely tied to that of *Juche*; a legacy from the 1960s when he was responsible for upgrading the philosophy into the "monolithic" ideology of the KWP.[31] Any revision of the principles of *Juche* by Kim Jong Il has the potential to irreversibly undermine his own legitimacy, not just in the eyes of the conservative military, but also in the eyes of the population at large.[32]

In the short term Kim must secure his internal legitimacy with the military, for it poses a far greater threat to his position as leader of the DPRK, than does the external legitimacy crisis facing the DPRK. The lack of military training in Kim Jong Il's background has ensured that he is not well respected by some sections of the military.[33] Yet without the support of the military, at least in the short term, Kim cannot hope to survive. Ultimately however, if Kim is to secure the long term existence of his regime and the DPRK, he must undertake reform. The extent to which the wider population can continue to endure the current hardships must surely be limited. While the depth of political self

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[30] R. Scalapino, *The Last of the Leninists*, Washington D.C., Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 1992, p.55.

[31] R. Shinn, "North Korea: Squaring Reality with Orthodoxy", op. cit., p.89. This continues to be the case following the death of Kim Il Sung. In several articles in the North Korean media, Kim Jong Il has reiterated his intention to uphold the values of his father's thought. It would make little sense to make such a public declaration of intent if he intended to dispense with his father's philosophy at a later stage. "Paper on Kim Chong-il's 'Revolutionary Feats'", *FBIS-EAS 94-142*, 25 July 1994, p.60; *Chungang Ilbo*, Reuter Australasian Service, October 1994; "Tough Talking from Kim", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 November 1994, p.21.

[32] It is conceivable that Kim Jong Il may attempt to adopt a program of economic reform under the guise of 'socialism with Korean characteristics'. Unlike Deng Xiaoping however, Kim Jong Il will find it far more difficult to move against the path laid out by his father. Deng's legitimacy rested in part on moving China away from the excesses of the late Maoist period. In contrast, much of Kim's legitimacy will rest on maintaining the direction of his father.

[33] In view of Kim Jong Il's lack of military knowledge, Kim Il Sung worked to cultivate support for his son amongst top military officials by placing Kim Jong Il in positions of command. As a result of this Kim Jong Il enjoys the support of many of the leading military figures in the KPA. The extent of his support amongst junior officers is in doubt and this group may prove to be a source of future concern for Kim Jong Il. T. Kim, "Kim Jong Il: North Korea's New Leader", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, September 1994, p.425; T. North, "The Kim Jong-Il Succession Problem in the Context of the North Korean Political Structure", op. cit., p.60.

awareness amongst the North Korean population is not likely to be of the same magnitude of that in East European nations, the potential for popular dissent does exist.[34] The paradox of totalitarian suppression ensures that it is likely that within North Korean society, there is a group of individuals, who possess a true understanding of the repressive nature of the Kim regime.[35]

For the immediate term it would appear that Kim Jong Il has decided that his best option for securing the future of his state and his regime lies in the nuclear program. It is a strategy that appears to be working, at least for the moment. North Korea is a global player, able to hold its own in negotiations with the US. It may not be a part of any particular group of nations, however the fact of these negotiations alone has done much to restore its external legitimacy. It has concluded an agreement with the US, that not only brings with it technical and economic aid, but also the possibility of diplomatic recognition by the US. It has apparently been able to do so at minimal cost to its nuclear program. For the long term however, the situation is less promising for either side. The current trend in negotiations suggests that the US will not achieve its goal of securing the demise of North Korea's nuclear program for some time at least. Despite the recent agreement, the US is still no closer to knowing the full extent of the North Korean nuclear program. Furthermore, the possibility that the DPRK may rescind this latest agreement must remain relatively high, at least in the immediate future. This does not mean that the situation is any more promising for the DPRK. Ultimately, the long term survival of the North Korean state and the Kim regime will depend on its ability to address the growing economic crisis it now faces, while concurrently protecting the legitimacy of both the state and the regime. For the present it would seem that the strategy of using nuclear weapons as a guarantee of regime and state legitimacy has worked; in the long term, however, the future for Kim Jong Il and North Korea is far less certain.

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[34] On the question of the limits of North Korean civil society, see: J. Cotton, "Civil Society in the Political Transition of North Korea", *Korea and World Affairs*, Summer 1992.

[35] P. Monk, "Coping with the End of History: Pyongyang and the Realm of Freedom", *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis*, vol.4 no.2, Winter 1992, p.103.

CHAPTER THREE

FOREIGN POLICY DILEMMAS: CHINA AND THE KOREAN NUCLEAR CRISIS.

Throughout the North Korean nuclear crisis, the US and regional nations have emphasised the importance of China to any successful resolution of the issue. The Clinton administration, in its negotiations with the DPRK and other parties involved in the crisis, has consciously avoided making decisions that might have offended China or worse, attracted China's scorn. In particular, the US has essentially avoided the topic of sanctions, except as an occasional threat, because it cannot afford to alienate China. A significant factor in the Clinton administration's approval of the continuation of China's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status, was the hope that China would adopt a more constructive role in the crisis than US officials felt had been the case. For its part however, China has been extremely reluctant to get involved in the crisis, either as a supporter of its long time ally the DPRK, or as a responsible global citizen of the UN.

For China, the North Korean nuclear crisis represents far more than simple questions of nuclear proliferation or securing strategic interests. At the heart of the matter lies the question of legitimacy; not only the external legitimacy of the Chinese state, but the internal legitimacy of the CCP regime as well. The North Korean nuclear crisis presents Chinese foreign policy with a dilemma. The actions of Chinese foreign policy during the current nuclear crisis reflect its attempts to resolve the conflicting demands of internal and external legitimacy. Chinese foreign policy has attempted to secure the internal legitimacy of the CCP by protecting the interests of the economic reform program, while concurrently protecting its external legitimacy as a developing socialist state through vocal defence of its North Korean ally.

The origins of the current crisis in China's internal and external legitimacy can be traced to the failure of Mao to secure the long term legitimacy of the CCP. Legitimate rule

in socialist systems rests in part on their ability to fulfil the goals that form their raison d'etre.[1] When Mao's revolution came to power in 1949, it did so on the basis that it would make communism a reality, in addition to making China both rich and powerful.[2] While initially Mao was successful in achieving many of his goals of social and agricultural reform, by the time of the Great Leap Forward the situation had begun to deteriorate. The setbacks to Mao's legitimacy caused by his failure to achieve overly ambitious goals, were further stressed by the years of the Cultural Revolution. The widespread economic disruption and social upheaval that dominated the years of the cultural revolution, alienated many elements in popular and elitist Chinese society, sowing the seeds for a future legitimacy crisis.[3] Yet despite this, Mao was able to retain his position of power because the success of the 1949 revolution was sufficient to legitimise his rule in the face of all other shortcomings.[4]

Following Mao's death however, the lustre of his revolutionary achievements began to fade, forcing the ruling communist party into a state of acute legitimacy crisis. Under Mao's guidance China had not become rich and powerful, nor had it reached the ultimate goal of communism. Aware of the ruling party's declining legitimacy, Deng came to power in 1978, intent on restoring the legitimacy of the CCP, and that of his own reformist faction. Deng's succession to the party leadership represented a shift in the means of securing the internal legitimacy of both the party and his faction. This shift entailed a move away from an emphasis on charismatic performance to one based on the deliverance of economic prosperity to the Chinese population through the adoption of economic reform.[5] Ideology remained a factor in Deng's attempts to build 'socialism with Chinese characteristics', because to have abandoned his socialist heritage would have been to irreversibly undermine the internal legitimacy of the CCP, and the legitimacy of his own

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[1] T. Rigby, "Introduction: Political Legitimacy, Weber and Communist Mono-organisational Systems", in T. Rigby & F. Feher, *Political Legitimation in Communist States*, London, MacMillan Press, 1982, pp.10-12.

[2] F. Teiwes, *Leadership, Legitimacy, and Conflict in China*, New York, M.E. Sharpe, 1984, p.54.

[3] ibid., p.76.

[4] ibid, p.92.

[5] G. Segal, "The Muddle Kingdom?: China's Changing Shape", *Foreign Affairs*, vol.73 no.3, 1994, p.44.

reformist clique.[6] Furthermore, such a move would have been to risk losing China's links with the Communist Bloc and the Third World, both of which provided a significant portion of China's international legitimacy.

Foreign policy became a key instrument in Deng's attempts to secure the internal legitimacy of the CCP. It is because economic development is a matter of relativity that foreign policy has played a key role in this quest for legitimacy.[7] As an instrument in Deng's program of economic reform and internal legitimation, foreign policy, has de-emphasised military concerns as it has sought to establish economic links with the outside world.[8] Chinese foreign policy under Deng became overwhelmingly pragmatic; if it was good for China's economic reform program, it became Chinese foreign policy.[9] A most notable feature of this policy has been the establishment of strong economic relations with former ideological adversaries such as South Korea. The emphasis on economics in Chinese foreign policy has come at a price however, to the ideological foundations of CCP legitimacy. The open door policies have let in a flood of new ideas and concepts that have raised the expectations of the Chinese population, which in turn has undermined the legitimacy of the ruling Dengist faction and the CCP. Mounting internal instability and popular disquiet culminated with the student protests of 1989, the massacre of which signalled the true depth of the internal legitimacy crisis faced by the CCP. This massacre of students was a mockery of China's ideological rhetoric and identity, and as such had a direct effect on China's external legitimacy.[10]

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[6] S. Levine, "Perception and Ideology in Chinese Foreign Policy", in T. Robinson & D. Shambaugh (eds.), *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1994, p.31.

[7] C. Hamrin, "Elite Politics and Foreign Relations", in T. Robinson & D. Shambaugh (eds.), *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, ibid., p.77.

[8] This is not to say that national security did not remain an objective of Chinese foreign policy. Rather, the shift to an emphasis on economic affairs in Chinese foreign policy was paralleled by a shift from confrontation with neighbours to conciliation and cooperation, as China sought to establish a peaceful environment for its economic development. This has particularly been the case with regard to China's relations with the former Soviet Union, and more recently, India.

[9] T. Robinson, "Chinese Foreign Policy from the 1940s to the 1990s", in T. Robinson & D, Shambaugh (eds.), *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, op. cit., p.568.

[10] It is perhaps useful at this point to recall the words of Confucius as written by Zeng Guofan at the time of the Taiping rebellion: "if you can rule your own country, who dares insult you?" S. Teng & J. Fairbank (eds.), *China's Response to the West: A Documentary Survey, 1839-1923*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1954, p.63, cited in W. Kirby, "Traditions of Centrality, Authority, and Management in Modern China's Foreign Relations", in T. Robinson & D. Shambaugh (eds.), *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, op. cit., p.20.

The external legitimacy crisis that grew out of the Tiananmen massacre was further emphasised following the collapse of the international communist movement. China, like North Korea, suffered an acute identity and legitimacy crisis as a result of the apparent failure of its international identity.[11] In view of these negative consequences, Chinese foreign policy has focused on securing the ideological legitimacy of both the communist regime and its ruling faction, and the Chinese state. In this respect, Chinese foreign policy has sought to maintain strong links with the developing world and remaining socialist states, and protect its sovereignty from the campaigns of peaceful evolution being waged by the west.[12]

Chinese foreign policy however has not been able to abandon the needs of internal legitimacy. Since the end of the Cold War, Chinese foreign policy has sought to protect the needs of internal and external legitimacy. In answering to the twin demands of internal and external legitimation however, Chinese foreign policy has become an unsustainable bridge over the ever-widening gap between ideology and economic necessity. Chinese foreign policy in the post-Cold War period is characterised by a dualism, in which it seeks to address both the ideological and economic needs of the Chinese state and ruling regime. The difficult task of finding the correct balance between the needs of economic modernisation and ideological foundations has become the dominant factor in Chinese relations with the rest of the world. It was the dominant factor in the Chinese approach to the Gulf War of 1990-91, where initial support for UN action was followed by condemnation of what it regarded as US imperialism. Such actions had the dual purpose of securing the internal legitimacy of the regime by sustaining the progress of the economic reform program, while also serving the interests of China's ideological identity, and hence its international legitimacy.

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[11] Identification with the Communist Bloc legitimated the adherrence of the CCP to the values of Marxist-Leninist thought. When the Communist Bloc collapsed a large element of CCP internal and external legitimacy collapsed with it. L. Dittmer, "China's Search for Its Place in the World", in B Womack (ed.), *Contemporary Chinese Politics in Historical Perspective*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p.249; K. Lieberthal, "The Collapse of the Communist World and Mainland China's Foreign Affairs", *Issues and Studies*, September 1992, p.9.

[12] Y. Wu, "The Collapse of the Bipolar System and mainland China's Foreign Policy", *Issues and Studies*, July 1993, p.5; Y. Pi, "Peking's Foreign Relations in the New International Situation", *Issues and Studies*, May 1992, p.14.

In the current nuclear crisis however, China has found it far more difficult to negotiate between the demands of internal and external legitimacy. China's approach to the issue has been governed by domestic, regional and global factors.[13] These include China's own domestic economic reform program, its relationships with the two Koreas, its concept of sovereignty and the role of the UN, and its ever present concern over the role of the US in the international environment. Each of these factors, however, has been dominated by the demands of external and internal legitimacy, that has served to make China's approach to the issue of nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula seem at once both cooperative and conflicting. In contrast to the Gulf War, the future of a close ally is at stake; an ally whose significance lies not only in its strategic value, but also in its relevance to China's national and international identity as a socialist state.

Accordingly, China's reaction to the nuclear crisis has been careful to avoid alienating either the US and its allies or North Korea. China has condemned the North's attempts to acquire nuclear weapons, yet it has also refused to allow the consideration of the matter by the UN Security Council. At a meeting between Deng Xiaoping and North Korean Premier Kang Song San at the end of May 1993, Deng is reported to have condemned the attempts by the DPRK to acquire nuclear weapons. Deng asked that the North reconsider the advantages and disadvantages of withdrawal from the NPT.[14] China has strong reservations over a nuclear program in North Korea, particularly given its potential to trigger wholesale regional nuclear proliferation.[15]

Despite these feelings however, China has been strongly opposed to both the discussion of the issue at UN Security Council level and the possibility of imposing sanctions. In a statement prior to the voting on UN Security Council resolution 825,

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[13] It could be argued that China's stance on the Korean nuclear crisis is a direct result of the successionary politics now underway in China. Such an argument would suggest that Chinese foreign policy has been paralysed by the reluctance of factions to take a hardened stance on any one issue in an attempt to maximise their legitimacy with other factions within the CCP. This offers a partial explanation for the actions of Chinese foreign policy, however it does minimise the many other factors that are involved in this issue.

[14] "Deng Advises Kim Il-song Not To Leave NPT", *FBIS-CHI-93-126*, 2 July 1993, p.5.

[15] G. Klintworth, "Asia-Pacific: More security, Less Uncertainty, New Opportunities", *The Pacific Review*, vol.5 no.3, 1992, p.224. Much of the impetus for a nuclear arms race would come from fears over the possibility that the DPRK, which has a long history of terrorist activities, may use a weapon as a direct threat, rather than as a deterrent. G. Segal, "North-East Asia: common security or a la carte?", *International Affairs*, vol.67 no.4, 1991, p.762.

China's ambassador to the UN, Li Zhaoxing said that China was against handling of the issue by the Security Council, "let alone having a resolution adopted on this issue by the council."[16] Yet although China expressed its opposition to the discussion of the matter at Security Council level, it did not oppose the adoption of the resolution; rather it was one of two nations who abstained from voting.[17] This stance against the discussion of the issue by the UN Security Council and the adoption of sanctions has been maintained throughout the crisis, throwing comments on the likely future direction of Chinese voting, made by South Korean UN Ambassador Yu Chong-ha, into doubt.[18] In April 1994, China successfully prevented the UN Security Council from adopting a resolution which threatened the use of sanctions if North Korea failed to comply with the requests for IAEA inspections.[19]

The conflict between China's anti-proliferation stance and anti-sanctions stance in this issue has been reflected in China's approach to the bilateral discussions between the US and the DPRK. China has been supportive of the US-DPRK negotiations on the issue, yet at times it has brought into question US motives. Initial response to the conduct of these negotiations was fairly positive, particularly when it is considered that the first US-DPRK talks were held in Beijing. In addition, China consistently argued in its opposition to the discussion of the issue in the UN Security Council, that the issue be resolved through direct negotiations between concerned parties. There have however been elements within the Chinese media that have highly critical of the US approach to the negotiations. *Renmin Ribao* criticised the US for acting unfairly in the negotiations on grounds it had attached significant and unfair conditions to the holding of a third round of high level negotiations.[20] An editorial in the Hong Kong paper *Wen Wei Po* went so far as to condemn the talks as a face saving exercise by the US to establish diplomatic relations with the DPRK, and as an

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[16] "UN Envoy on Security Council Vote on DPRK", *FBIS-CHI-93-090*, 12 May 1993, p.1.

[17] It is not surprising that the other nation to abstain was Pakistan. It has developed its own nuclear weapons program from outside the auspices of the NPT. Should the UN have decided in the event of DPRK withdrawal from the NPT to impose sanctions, it would have set an undesired precedent for Pakistan.

[18] Ambassador Yu said that he felt that if North Korea continued to prevent IAEA inspections, China would ultimately not oppose "international society's measures." "North Korea: South Korea's UN envoy Says China Will Not Veto Sanctions Against North", *Reuters News Service*, Reuter Australasian Briefing, 7 February 1994.

[19] J. Bone & I. Brodie, "China Prevents UN Sanctions Against Korea", *Reuter Australasian Briefing*, 1 April 1994.

[20] "Article Views US-DPRK Talks on Nuclear Inspections", *FBIS-CHI-94-053*, 18 March 1994, p.11-12.

attempt to set up major business contracts with the DPRK in the form of sales of LWR technology.[21]

Of all the factors that are guiding China's foreign policy, as it relates to the current nuclear crisis, key determinants are the relationships China has with North and South Korea. China's relationships with the two Koreas are at once reflective of the two conflicting objectives of Chinese foreign policy. China's relationship with North Korea reflects China's ideological past and its desire to maintain its identity as a socialist nation. Furthermore, China has been keen to maintain its relationship with the North because it enhances Chinese security and gives China greater political leverage with other regional powers, particularly as it has diplomatic relations with both Koreas.[22] In contrast, China's relationship with South Korea is indicative of the emphasis on economic development now placed in Chinese foreign policy.

China has had a lengthy, though not untroubled relationship with North Korea. Initial ties between the CCP and Kim Il Sung date from 1931, when Kim joined the CCP.[23] After expulsion from a middle school in Jilin because of anti-Japanese activities, Kim moved to the Tumen region of China, where his affiliation with the CCP helped him cement firm relationships with key Chinese communist figures, including Mao. North Korea under Kim Il Sung had its own versions of Mao's Great Leap Forward, mass line, and personality cult, while the governing philosophy owes much to Mao's strategy of the Yenan period.[24] At this time, Kim also developed strong relations with the communist party in the Soviet Union, and it was on the coat tails of the Soviet occupation force at the end of the Second World War, that Kim was installed as the leader of North Korea.[25] Until the collapse of the Soviet Union, North Korea would frequently exploit Sino-Soviet rivalry to serve its own ends,

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[21] "Editorial Discusses US-DPRK Nuclear Talks", *FBIS-CHI-93-141*, 26July 1993, p.1.

[22] H. Jia & Q. Zhuang, "China's Policy Toward The Korean Peninsula", *Asian Survey*, vol.32 no.12, December 1992, p.1142.

[23] A. Buzo, & J. Shim, "From Dictator to Deity", *FEER*, 21 July 1994, p.18.

[24] J. Cotton, "The Unravelling of "China" and the China-Korea Relationships", *Korea and World Affairs*, Spring 1994, pp.74-75.

[25] This occurred much to the amazement of local political forces, most of whom came from the elitist Christian community. ibid., p.18-19.

although its common heritage with China meant that its ties were always closer with that country. North Korea demonstrated the value it attaches to its relationship with China when, following China-ROK diplomatic normalisation, it curtailed its criticism of China. This was in stark contrast to the public denunciation the Soviet Union received from the DPRK following its establishing diplomatic relations with the ROK.[26]

While the common historical background and similar cultural foundations have aided the development of close relations, the importance China attaches to the Korean peninsula in its strategic outlook, has helped to strengthen its relations with the DPRK. Traditionally, the Tumen River region and the Korean peninsula have been the gateway for contact, peaceful and otherwise between China and Japan. The strong historical association Chinese leaders have with invasion and the Korean peninsula, was reflected by Chinese accusations in 1950 that Washington was following the footsteps of previous Japanese aggressors in Korea.[27] Conscious of this historical role played by the Korean peninsula, China regards North Korea as the buffer zone that separates its industrial north from the US forces in the ROK.

Under Deng Xiaoping, however, China has undergone a reassessment of its strategic interests as the pressures of securing internal legitimacy through economic reform have mounted. This reassessment began with the renunciation of the inevitability of war in the early 1980s, and continued with the Sino-Soviet rapprochement of the late 1980s and early 1990s. This has changed China's understanding of the strategic importance of the DPRK. The cessation of hostility between the Soviet Union and China lessened China's need to rely on the DPRK as a source of support in the struggle against the forces of 'social imperialism'.[28] Most important to this reassessment of strategic interests however, has been

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[26] H. Jia & Q. Zhuang, "China's Policy Toward The Korean Peninsula", op. cit., pp.1143-1144. The frequent diplomatic exchanges between the DPRK and the PRC are inevitably accompanied by the usual affirmation of a friendship sealed in blood and a common revolutionary experience. S. Ma, "*Zhong-Chao Youhao Hezuo Buduan Fazhan*" (Sino-Korean Friendly Cooperation Continues to Develop), *Liaowang* (Outlook Weekly), no.18, 6 May 1991, p.4; C. Zhou, "*Tuidong Zhong-Chao Youhao Hezuo Guanxi Buduan Fazhan*" (Promotion of Friendly and Cooperative Sino-Korean Relations Continues to Develop), *Liaowang*, 13 April 1992, p.4.

[27] A. Barnett, *China and the Major Powers in East Asia*, Washington D.C., The Brookings Institution, 1977, p.142.

[28] H. Kim, "China's Korea Policy since the Tiananmen Square Incident", in F. Macchiario & R. Oxnam (eds.), *The China Challenge, Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, vol.38, no.2, 1990, p.108.

the adoption of the economic reform program within China. This program of economic reform has been significant for several reasons. China's economic reform program has brought about a decentralisation of economic power within China. This decentralisation of economic power has brought with it a pluralisation of interests in the Chinese foreign policy decision making process. It is possible that in its approach to the nuclear issue, Beijing authorities will be asked to consider the views of Jilin province, and particularly provinces of the Bohai region, which have the most extensive economic relations with the ROK.[29]

Most significantly, however, China has regarded a peaceful environment as vital to its economic development, and as such it has been most reluctant to see the development of hostilities on the peninsula which may threaten this development. Furthermore, under the program of economic reform China began to look toward South Korea as a potential market, a source of investment, and as a potential model of authoritarian capitalism. To this end China reduced its support of North Korean militant adventurism by withdrawal of military aid to the North, and public announcements that portray the North's military capability as a direct response to the military build-up in the South.[30]

Despite this withdrawal of military support, and moves to establish closer ties with the ROK, China has not abandoned the DPRK. Recent experiences with German and Vietnamese unification have led China to interpret both of these modes of reunification to be undesirable and likely to pose a significant risk to its own economic development and identity as a socialist nation.[31] Reunification would not only remove the North Korean buffer zone, it would also draw highly valued ROK investment away from China.[32] In an

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[29] In line with the Chinese policy of linking specific geographical regions with specific external countries or regions for trade, the Bohai region of Northeast China has become the principle destination and source of South Korean investment and trade. K. Lee & C. Lee, "Trade Between Bohai of China and Korea: An International perspective", *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Winter 1990, pp.15-35.

[30] H. Lee, "Future Dynamics in Sino-Korea Relations", *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Fall 1990, p.39.

[31] S. Kim, "China's Korea Policy in a Changing Regional and global Order", *China Information*, vol.8 nos.1/2, 1993, pp.77-78.

[32] Estimates of the cost to the ROK of reunification a la the German model vary, although most estimates make the cost of the exercise appear prohibitive for the South Korean economy, which had a GDP less than half that of West Germany in 1989. Assuming that the North does not adopt Chinese style economic liberalisation prior to the year 2000, the cost of reunification to the ROK would be approximately US$230 billion dollars. These figures do not of course say anything of

attempt to minimise the risks of Korean reunification to its own economic development, China encouraged North Korean acceptance of separate entry of the two Koreas into the UN, and the development of economic reforms similar to those enacted in China under Deng.[33] China's hope is to place North Korea in a position that would ensure that on the one hand it would not attempt to reunify the Koreas as the Vietminh had done in Vietnam, and on the other hand place the DPRK in a position where it would not be absorbed by the ROK as East Germany had been absorbed by West Germany.

China's attempts to alter its relationship with the North away from military confrontation with the ROK to economic cooperation has met with limited success. Kim Il Sung was extremely reluctant to undertake economic reforms in North Korea, as evidenced by the rapid termination in 1985 of a brief experiment in economic reform during 1984.[34] Kim's deep suspicion of economic reform was reflected in his comments to Chinese President Yang Shangkun in 1992, that "it is the two characters 'economics' that will spell an end to China's communist cause."[35] Despite Chinese moves to limit trade to hard currency, restrict oil donations, and insist on rapid loan repayment, China's efforts have had some effect. This has particularly been the case in encouraging the North to undertake steps toward the development of the Tumen river basin into a special economic zone, similar to those of China's South-east. China's attitude toward the development of the trade zone has been fairly positive, particularly as it would give China's North-eastern industrial sectors access to a new port. Furthermore, it is hoped that encouraging the development of the Tumen region may inspire widespread economic reform within North Korea. There are considerable obstacles to the development of the region, however, not the least of which is the current nuclear crisis, which is preventing the DPRK from gaining access to the

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the social cost of integrating two societies that have developed on the basis of mutual hatred. "Kim Jong Il's inheritance", *The Economist*, 16 July 1994, pp.19-21.

[33] China also felt that if it did not press the DPRK into acceptance of separate admission of the two Koreas, it would isolate itself from the pro-Seoul position of other members of the UN Security Council, and place its developing economic relationship with the ROK in jeopardy. J. Hao & Q. Zhuang, "China's Policy Toward The Korean Peninsula", op. cit., p.1145. Chinese moves to encourage reform in North Korea stem in part from CCP distaste for the successionary politics of the Kim regime. H. Harding, *China and Northeast Asia: The Political Dimension*, Lanham, University Press of America, 1988, p.34.

[34] A. Buzo, & J. Shim, "From Dictator to Deity", op. cit., p.19.

[35] "Article Views Sino-U.S. Trade, DPRK Ties", *FBIS-CHI-93-088*, 10 May 1993, p.2.

reported US$30 billion it requires for infrastructure development.[36] In his final years, Kim Il Sung undertook the development of foreign trade laws, and laws for the establishment of foreign investment in North Korea, with development of the Tumen river basin in mind. These reforms were in part prompted by the growing realisation of the gravity of North Korea's economic predicament, the first public acknowledgment of which came during the Sixth session of the Ninth DPRK Supreme Peoples' Assembly in 1993.[37]

Despite the difficulties China has experienced in its recent dealings with the DPRK, it is reluctant to let an old friend fall by the wayside. The task of maintaining firm relations with the DPRK, however, has been made increasingly difficult by the burgeoning relationship China has with the ROK. Economics has been the foundation of this relationship. Two way trade that was worth US$40,000 in 1979, has ballooned to an estimated total value in excess of US$10 billion by the end of 1993, and is expected to surpass US$20 billion in value by the end of 1995.[38] Much of the trade has been the export of raw materials and labour intensive products from China, in particular the Bohai region, in return for South Korean machinery, advanced technology and petrochemicals. China's trade relationship with the ROK currently runs at a deficit as it continues to import value-added materials for its economic development. While this deficit may become cause for concern in the future, the sentiment in Beijing appears to suggest that this deficit is acceptable if it reduces Chinese dependence on the US and Japanese technology markets.

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[36] The figure of US$30 billion was brought forward by a UN Development Program investigation, and was to be the total expenditure over a period of twenty years. J. Lu, "*Dongbeiya Jingji Hezuo Yu Tumen Jiang Sanjue Zhou Kaifa*" (Northeast Asian Economic Cooperation and the Development of the Tumen River Delta), *Liaowang*, 30 March 1992, p.44; M. Clifford, "Send Money: North Korea appeals for investment in free-trade zone", *FEER*, 30 September 1993; E. Kim, "Political Economy of the Tumen River basin Development: Problems and Prospects", *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies*, Summer 1992, pp.35-48.

[37] "Column Views 'Policy Readjustment' by DPRK", *FBIS-CHI-93-239*, 15 December 1993, p.3.

[38] Since China began formal trade ties with the ROK in 1991, the volume of trade has increased at a phenomenal rate. Since 1990, two way trade between the PRC and the ROK has climbed from $US 3 billion to in excess of $US 9 billion in 1992 and it is predicted to climb beyond this level over the next few years. In contrast the level of PRC-DPRK trade in 1992 was a little over US$700 million dollars, mostly in the form of exports to the DPRK. *Direction of Trade Statistics*, March & December 1993; D. Wu, "*Zhong-Han Jingji Guanxi Wenbu De Fazhan*" (Chinese-South Korean Trade Relationship Develops Steadily", *Guoji Maoyi* (International Trade), no.10, 1992, p.49. "A Bomb for All?", *Asiaweek*, 7 April 1993, pp.24-25."Article Views Diplomatic Ties With ROK", *FBIS-CHI-92-034*, 20 February 1992, p.14; S. Kim, "China's Korea Policy in a Changing Regional and global Order", op. cit., p.81.

The conflict between China's economic relationship with the ROK and its historical and ideological relationship with the DPRK, is parallelled by a similar dilemma in China's relationship with the US. It is in short, a relationship in which the conflict between China's internal and external legitimacy needs has dominated its approach. China's America dilemma is that it relies heavily on the US as a significant market for its exports and potential source of technology, yet it is reluctant to accept what it regards as hegemonistic US demands and attitudes, not only as they relate to the Korean nuclear crisis, but to world affairs in general.[39] This dilemma was suppressed during the Cold War by America's need to play the China 'card' in its relationship with the Soviet Union, and Chinese need for an American counterweight to the Soviet threat. The collapse of the USSR brought an end to this strategic triangle, and with it an end to US tolerance of issues that China regards as 'internal matters', in particular human rights.

At the heart of China's growing concern with the US lies its outdated conception of state sovereignty. Chinese definitions of state sovereignty hail from the revolutionary experiences of its leaders, its long history of invasion and exploitation by foreigners, and reflect Westphalian concepts of sovereignty narrowly defined.[40] For Chinese leaders, the role of the state is defined as the sole and legitimate actor in the international system, and the sole subject of international law.[41] Chinese experience with colonial domination by Western powers has made its leaders acutely sensitive to western criticism on issues it regards are at a sub-state level. Nowhere has this sensitivity been more pronounced than in China's dealings with the US on Human Rights issues. China remains deeply critical of US moves to link human rights with its MFN status and labels the US human rights crusade as little more than a US attempt to undermine China's existence, and an example of US double standards.[42]

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[39] S. Ding, "Peking's Foreign Policy in the Changing World", *Issues and Studies*, August 1991, p.20-21.

[40] I. Wilson, "China and the New World Order", in R. Leaver & J. Richardson (eds.), *The Post-Cold War Order: Diagnoses and Prognoses*, 1993, St Leonards, Allen & Unwin, 1993, p.201-202.

[41] S. Kim, *China In and Out of the Changing World Order*, Princeton, Centre of International Studies, Princeton University, 1991, p.12.

[42] "Article on U.S. 'Plotting' Against China", *FBIS-CHI-93-135*, 16 July 1993, p.5; "Editorial Criticises U.S. Role in Somalia, Balkans", *FBIS-CHI-93-155*, 13 August 1993, pp.1-2.

The Chinese concerns with US infringement of its sovereignty are compounded by growing concerns of the US role in world affairs. Chinese views of the changing nature of the world system have oscillated between concepts of multi-polarity, in which US power is in sharp decline, and a unipolar world in which US dominance is the main threat to Chinese development.[43] Irrespective of the position taken by any one analyst, most agree that the potential for the US to revert to 'power politics' in its dealings with China remains high.[44] Chinese criticism of US 'power politics' and hegemonic behaviour stems in part from a fear that the US may apply tactics used against Haiti and Iraq, to China, and concern that the US is maintaining a campaign of 'peaceful evolution' against Beijing and other socialist nations.[45] These concerns have been a major cause of the Chinese anti-sanctions stance during the Korean nuclear crisis.

Much of China's concern over the US role in East Asia, however, has been tempered by a conscious attempt to focus on the development of Sino-US economic ties. The US is China's most significant trading partner, with two-way trade worth a reported US$27.7 billion in 1993.[46] Most importantly, China needs US support to gain membership of the GATT and maintain access to development aid from international financial institutions such

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[43] A frequently argued pattern is one of a unipolar world in which declining US power is resulting in a shift to the development of a multipolar international system. The volume of Chinese writing on the developments in the post-Cold War international environment is enormous. For a selection see: J. Zhou, "*Shijie Geju Bianhua De Qushi*", (Trends in World Pattern Changes), *Liaowang*, no.19, 13 May 1991, p.4; G. Wan "*Haiwan Zhanzheng Dui Shijie Geju Yanbian De Yingxiang*" (The Impact of the Gulf War on the Evolution of the World Structure), *Liaowang*, no.14, 8 April 1991, p.40; Y. Song, "*Xifang Duileng Zhanzheng Hou Shijie De Zai Renshi He Dangqian Guoji Xingshi De Jige Xin Tedian*" (The West's Second Thoughts On The Post-Cold War World and Some New Characteristics Of The Current International Situation), and Y. Yan, "*Lengzhan Hou Guoji Xingshi Tedian*" (Characteristics Of The Post-Cold War Situation), *Guoji Wenti*(International Issues), March 1993, pp.1 & 8.

[44] A recent example of US 'power politics' that has directly affected China, is to be found in the *Yinhe* incident of 1993. The Chinese response to the US pressure on the issue was extremely critical. See: N. Chanda, "Drifting Apart", *FEER*, 26 August 1993, p.10; "*Guoji Yulun Xuping 'Yinhe Hao' Shijian*" (Continuing International Comment on the '*Yinhe*' Incident), *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily), 8 September 1993; "Foreign Ministry On 'Yinhe' Incident", *Beijing Review*, 13 September 1993, p.4.

[45] Chinese accusations that it was the subject of a campaign of peaceful evolution by the US, became strident in the wake of the Tiananmen Massacre and the collapse of the Soviet Union. In Shambaugh's opinion, the Chinese perception is not entirely unwarranted. See: D. Shambaugh, "Peking's Foreign Policy Conundrum Since Tienanmen: Peaceful Coexistence vs. Peaceful Evolution", *Issues and Studies*, November 1992, pp.65-85; J. Wang & Z. Lin, "Chinese Perceptions In The Post-Cold War Era: Three Images of the United States", *Asian Survey*, vol.32 no.10, October !992, p.907; Y. Pi, "Peking's Foreign Relations in the New International Situation", *Issues and Studies*, May 1992, pp.14-15.

[46] "Minister Wu Yi On Sino-US Trade", *Beijing Review*, 4 April 1994, p.10.

as the IMF and the World Bank.[47] To this end China has made some headway in improving its human rights record, if only marginally, and has attempted to portray itself as a more benign state.[48] The economic relationship between China and the US, however, has been insufficient to form the basis of stable Sino-US relations.[49] Growing disquiet in the US Congress over trade relations, and attempts to link this with the continuation of China's MFN status, have soured relations. Nevertheless, China has attempted to pursue a policy of peaceful coexistence and anti-peaceful evolution with the US.[50] This approach reflects the conflicting demands of China's legitimacy crisis. While it must sustain access to economic aid and investment for the sake of its internal legitimacy, Chinese foreign policy must also protect the external needs of its socialist identity.

China's dual approach of serving both economic and ideological needs that has dominated its relations with the US in recent years, has also been dominant in China's approach to the UN. The Chinese refusal to consider UN Security Council discussions of the North Korean nuclear crisis reflects the influence of Westphalian notions of state sovereignty in the Chinese approach to the UN. China has turned to the UN Security Council in the post-Cold War period to compensate for the global influence it lost as a result of the end of the strategic triangle. The UN provides China with global recognition of its identity as a socialist nation with a moral government.[51] In view of the prestige China gains from its position in the UN Security Council, it is hardly surprising that China has treated moves to reform the UN with great caution.[52] China's approach to the UN, however, has been dominated by its concerns for state sovereignty. Chinese leaders have always

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[47] China has shifted from being a net exporter of development aid to being the world's leading recipient of aid (more than US$50 billion dollars in 1990). D. Shambaugh, "Peking's Foreign Policy Conundrum Since Tienanmen: Peaceful Coexistence vs. Peaceful Evolution", op. cit., p.72.

[48] See: A. Kent, *Between Freedom and Subsistence: China and Human Rights*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993; S. Kim, "Thinking Globally in Post-Mao China", *Journal of Peace Research*, vol.27 no.2, 1990, p.199.

[49] H. Harding, *A Fragile Relationship: The United States and China Since 1972*, Washington D.C., The Brookings Institute, 1992, p.16.

[50] China's reaction to the Gulf War demonstrates Chinese willingness to compromise some of its ideological concerns to satisfy the needs of its economic development. See: H. Huo, "Patterns Of Behaviour In China's Foreign Policy: The Gulf Crisis and Beyond", *Asian Survey*, vol.32 no.3, March 1992, pp.263-276; J. Malik, "Peking's Response to the Gulf Crisis", *Issues and Studies*, September 1991; H. Harding, *A Fragile Relationship: The United States and China Since 1972*, op. cit, pp.269-275.

[51] S. Kim, *China In and out of the Changing World Order*, op. cit., p.31.

[52] "Beijing Urges Caution in Security Council Reform", *FBIS-CHI-93-126*, 2 July 1993, p.1.

been apprehensive about the impact of international interaction on internal political and social stability.[53] To this end, China has adopted a maxi/mini approach to the UN. During the post-Mao period, China's UN policy has been aimed at extracting maximum benefit from its involvement with the UN, while minimising the costs of its involvement to its sovereignty.

China's behaviour in the UN in recent years is consistent with this perspective. China has altered its approach to issues of arms control and peace keeping as a means of extracting maximum benefit from the UN. In each case, however, China has attached significant strings to protect its own interests and development.[54] Key amongst these interests, is China's role as leader of the Third World. China is reluctant to be seen as a fellow traveller of the west on key issues in the UN, lest it damage China's external legitimacy as a developing socialist state. This concern was reflected by China's abstention on resolution 678 prior to the Gulf War. By abstaining from voting on the resolution, China was able to maintain that it had acted independently of the west, and had upheld the rights of developing nations around the world.[55] Little need be said of the obvious benefits of such actions to the external legitimacy of China, at least amongst developing nations. Yet the utility of the Third World as a source of China's external legitimacy is fading. The gulf between China and the Third World has significantly widened since the 1960s, due largely to divisions within the third world, and China's own growing economic power.[56] China, however, still regards itself as a developing nation and thus adjusts its UN action accordingly. This has been clear on the Chinese approach to the issue of human rights, where China has been able to gain significant support.[57]

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[53] H. Harding, "China's Co-operative Behaviour", in T. Robinson & D. Shambaugh (eds.), *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, op. cit., p.398.

[54] See: S. Kim, "Thinking Globally in Post-Mao China", op. cit., pp.191-209.

[55] S. Kim, "International Organisational Behaviour", in T. Robinson & D. Shambaugh (eds.), *Chinese Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, op. cit., p.423.

[56] S. Kim, *The Third World in Chinese World Policy*, Princeton, World Order Studies Program, Occasional Paper no.19, Princeton University, 1989, pp.2-3.

[57] At the 49th session of the UN in March 1993, China was able to galvanise sufficient support from developing nations to defeat a proposed draft resolution on human rights in China. "U.S. Accused of Human Rights 'Double Standard'", *FBIS-CHI-93-048*, 15 March 1993, p.3; Z. Zhang, "Unjust Cause Finds Little Support", *Beijing Review*, 22 March 1993, p.10.

China's approach to the role of the UN in the North Korean nuclear issue reflects the view that it is anxious to limit the role of the international organisation.[58] Chinese behaviour in the crisis suggests it is adopting the maxi/mini approach that reaped success for China in 1990-91. While China has criticised threats to discuss the nuclear issue, it has abstained on the few votes that have taken place. Chinese concerns over UN involvement in the nuclear issue are motivated by the desire to avoid falling into a situation where it may be forced to choose between either the west or developing nations, and a deep seated fear that the UN may at some stage use similar tactics against China itself. China is reluctant to see North Korea become the testing ground for future anti-China action by the UN.[59]

China is most anxious to protect its own nuclear weapons program from possible UN scrutiny. While China has no interest in the development of nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula, it is wary of UN measures against the DPRK, lest they in turn be used against China. China's traditional position has been to demonstrate support for the principle of nuclear disarmament, however in doing so China inevitably makes the point that disarmament moves by the superpowers are little more than a thinly veiled attempt to maintain their own nuclear superiority over developing countries.[60] Chinese concerns over the actions of the UN also stem from a fear that its own weapons export program will once again become a target for US sanctions. China acceded to the Missile Control regime in early 1992, however its exports of M-11 missiles to Pakistan attracted the attention of the US government, which imposed sanctions on dealings with ten Chinese aerospace

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[58] China's calls for a stronger UN role in the changing world order are almost always countered with the assumption that the UN "is not a 'world government' and cannot replace the policy decisions of sovereign states." Z. Ge, "Jia Qiang Lian He Guo Zuo Yong Shi Ren Xin Suo Xiang" (The will of the People is to Enhance the Role of the UN.), *Liaowang*, 23 September 1991, p.43.

[59] In this respect China's anti-sanctions stance in the Korean nuclear issue can be seen as a continuation of existing policy. It is this fear of anti-Chinese actions that has lead in part to China's continual opposition to the no-fly zones in Iraq and sanctions against Libya.

[60] W. Qian & H. Liu, "*Disi Liujie Lianda Zhanwang*" (Prospects for the 46th UN General Assembly), *Liaowang*, 23 September 1991, no.38, p.40; L. Wang, "Why is the US active in Banning Nuclear Tests?", *Beijing Review*, 13 September 1993, pp.8-9.

companies.[61] That these sanctions have been strongly condemned by China is hardly surprising; weapon exports are a significant source of income for the PLA.[62]

Finally, China's approach to the North Korean nuclear crisis has been governed in part by China's relations with its Asian neighbours outside of Korea. As with China's approach to its relations with the US and the UN, China's relations with the Asia region have been dominated by economic and ideological concerns. As argued above, China's condemnation of the North Korean nuclear program has resulted in part from its desire to create a stable regional environment for its economic development. In addition to this, China's criticisms of the DPRK nuclear program have been motivated by its desire to allay regional fears over its emerging economic and military power. China's persistent denials of the reported 'China Threat' have not assuaged the fears of its Asian neighbours.[63] China is anxious that its behaviour in the current crisis demonstrates to regional nations that it is a model citizen of the Asia-Pacific region.

Coupled with this attempt to remove the perception of China as a threat to regional peace, are Chinese concerns with its relations with Japan. Throughout the crisis, China has been conscious of Japanese concerns with not only the DPRK but with the role of China in the dispute.[64] Although China has been reluctant to place pressure on the DPRK, it has been anxious that its role in the crisis not place its relationship with Japan in jeopardy. In particular, China has been careful to ensure that its actions do not place its economic relationship with Japan at risk.[65] To this end China has emphasised the minimal role that it

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[61] N. Chanda, "Red Rockets' Glare", *FEER*, 9 September 1993, 1993, pp.10-11.

[62] Although revenue from arms exports to the Middle East has declined because of the emerging Russian export drive, Chinese exports to Iran were valued at US$1.1 billion in 1989-92. N. Chanda, "Drifting Apart", *FEER*, 26 August 1993, pp.10-11.

[63] This is particularly the case in Southeast Asia, where Chinese support of the Khmer Rouge and its claims to the Spratly islands in the South China Sea have placed it at odds with almost every nation. China maintains that it is not a threat, citing its adherence to the 'Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence', and its low defence expenditure (claimed to be US$7.3 billion though this is most likely an underestimate), in comparison to the US. See: "Article Calls 'China Threat Theory' 'Untenable'", *FBIS-CHI-93-132*, 13 July 1993, pp.2-3; Q. Qian, "Report on the International Situation" (5 September 1992), in *Issues and Studies*, January 1994, p.22.

[64] Both China and Japan have been in support of negotiations rather than sanctions in the nuclear dispute, although former Japanese Prime Minister Hosokawa urged China to persuade the DPRK to open itself to IAEA inspections during a visit to Beijing in March 1994. "Beijing International on Talks", *FBIS-CHI-93-103*, 1 June 1993, p.14; "China: Hosokawa's China Visit Focuses On N. Korea", *Reuters News Service*, Reuter Australasian Briefing, 22 March 1994.

[65] Sino-Japanese trade has developed to become one of the most important economic relationships for both countries. Trade that was valued at $US1 billion in 1971, has grown to US$20.2 billion in 1991. China has also been anxious to

can play in the resolution of the nuclear issue, in particular it has claimed it is unable to exert pressure on North Korea, which is a sovereign state.[66] Chinese actions in the crisis have also been motivated by its concern with Japan's emerging regional role.[67] Beijing views Japan as a signifiicant challenge to China's goal of becoming a global power. There is little doubt that a North Korean nuclear weapon would provide Japan with sufficient cause to consider revoking its anti-nuclear weapons stance. China, which is already concerned with Japan's emerging peacekeeping role, is anxious that North Korea not provide Japan with any excuse to expand its military role within the region.

The conflict between economic and ideological interests that has permeated China's relationship with Japan has been dominant through all the factors listed here as being pertinent to China's approach to the North Korean nuclear crisis. Chinese leaders, in their approach to the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula have been forced to consider the conflict between the benefits of its economic ties with the west and the ideological concerns raised by such relations. China would sooner not be placed in a position where it may have to choose between economics and ideology, as evidenced by its opposition to the discussion of sanctions in the UN Security Council. Whether it likes it or not however, the US and its allies have decided that China holds a portion of the key to the resolution of the issue, and have exerted pressure accordingly.

What is clear from this analysis of the Chinese reaction to the nuclear issue, is that the concerns of the Chinese leadership extend beyond that of protecting an old ally. In addressing the current nuclear crisis, Chinese foreign policy has had to address the pressing needs of internal and external legitimacy. Chinese foreign policy is now reflective of the dual demands of this search for legitimacy. This has been a direct product of a system that is at once neither wholly capitalist nor socialist. As the nuclear crisis has demonstrated

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adopt a position that will not place at risk, the reported US$9.3 billion of Japanese aid it has been trying to secure for the next five years. "Article Comments on Jiang Zemin's Japan Visit", *FBIS-CHI-92-070*, 10 April 1992, p.9; "China: Peking to be Urged to Lean on N. Korea", *Reuters News Service*, Reuter Australasian Briefing, 19 March 1994.

[66] "China: China Says it Cannot Mediate North Korea Dispute", *Reuters News Service*, Reuter Australasian Briefing, 16 March 1994.

[67] China's concern with Japan's future role within the region stems from historical patterns of Japanese regional action, and a belief that Japan is in the throes of a period of resurgent nationalism. C. Shih, *China's Just World: the Morality of Chinese Foreign Policy*, London, Lynne Rienner, 1993, pp.156-158.

however, Chinese foreign policy has yet to successfully resolve the competing demands of legitimacy that each system requires. Chinese foreign policy during the nuclear crisis has sought to sustain the internal legitimacy of the regime through support of the economic reform program, while concurrently protecting the international or external legitimacy of China through protection of China's socialist identity. China's distant and ambiguous stance on the question of a nuclear armed North Korea has been a direct result of its attempt to secure these conflicting demands.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this thesis has been on the interaction between a regime's foreign policy and its search for legitimacy. The context of the Korean nuclear crisis has proved to be an effective case study. In both of the nations examined, their respective searches for external and internal legitimacy have had a direct influence on the direction of their foreign policy actions during this crisis. It becomes clear from this examination, however, that it is not necessarily the case that the needs of external and internal legitimacy will be served concurrently by the use of foreign policy. In each case, foreign policy actions have attempted to resolve this conflict between the demands of external and internal legitimacy.

So what does this mean for the future of the North Korean nuclear threat? Clearly much hope has been placed in the most recent agreement between the US and the DPRK. There are many ambiguities, however, that continue to obscure the future of this agreement. In particular, rising domestic opposition to the agreement in the US, Japan, and South Korea, will cast a shadow over the future of the agreement.

Ultimately, however, the success of this agreement will ultimately depend on whether or not the North Korean regime feels that the agreement has addressed the concerns that lead it to the nuclear threshold. It has been argued here that a significant factor in the DPRK rationale for nuclear weapons has been the Kim regime's search for internal and external legitimacy. In view of this, it does seem that the October agreement has addressed some of the immediate concerns of the North Korean regime. The prospect of diplomatic recognition from the US in the future will give the DPRK much international legitimacy. This fact alone will give added domestic legitimacy to the emerging Kim Jong Il regime.

In the longer term, the situation is less clear for both parties. For the Kim regime, the nuclear agreement is a mixed blessing. It would seem that North Korea will be spared from IAEA inspections for at least five years, which would guarantee the short term existence of any stockpiled nuclear-weapons materials. For Kim Jong Il this may help him to secure the

support of the KPA as he seeks to assume the presidency of the DPRK. Kim's long term survival however, will depend on more than the support of the KPA. His internal legitimacy as North Korean leader will greatly depend on his ability to secure the economic future of his state. It is certain that the economic difficulties currently faced by North Korea will not be immediately addressed by this agreement, and will take some time to be corrected. Continued economic hardship may exact a heavy toll on the long term legitimacy of the Kim regime. Furthermore, the economic investment that is expected to arise from the agreement, may ultimately serve to undermine the legitimacy of the *Juche* system, and in turn undermine the legitimacy of Kim Jong Il himself. If Kim Jong Il finds that his future legitimacy needs are not served by the agreement, then the possibility for a repeat of recent events must remain high.

For the US, the agreement does not represent the end of its nuclear proliferation concerns. It should be noted that the DPRK reneged on a similar accord after initial agreement during August of 1994 and the recurrence of a similar situation is not beyond the realms of possibility. More important, however, is the failure of the agreement to secure the future of the North Korean nuclear program. While the agreement signals a freeze on the current nuclear program in North Korea, full scale inspections will not occur within the next five years. In view of this, it is difficult to visualise the agreement as the anti-proliferation success we are told it is.

The situation with regard to China is no less complex. China has been anxious to secure the economic needs of its internal legitimacy while concurrently protecting the external needs of its socialist identity. This has resulted in an ambiguous stance, in which China will neither condemn nor support outright the actions of either side in this crisis. Western perceptions of China's stance in this dispute will ultimately depend on the success or failure of the October accord. Should the agreement fail, China may once again come under US pressure to act more decisively. It is unlikely, however, that China would change its stance on this issue; rather it would continue the current policy of serving the dual needs

of ideology and economics. If the agreement withstands the test of time, China may feel that its actions were vindicated.

In the long term, the implications for Chinese foreign policy are less clear. As China proceeds further down the path of economic interdependence it is likely that this conflict between the dictates of economics and ideology will become more pronounced. Yet whether this will affect China's approach to other issues as greatly as it has affected its approach to this one is open to speculation. It is interesting to note that during the Gulf War, China's actions were dictated first and foremost by its need to secure the future of its economic reform program. China only turned to address the needs of its developing socialist national identity after it had secured the future of foreign economic aid and investment. China's focus on the external needs of its socialist identity has been more acute in this case, however, largely because North Korea is a nation with whom China shares a similar national identity. In this instance, China's dilemma has been more pronounced. Future Chinese foreign policy action, however, is likely to be dictated first and foremost by the economic needs of the regime's internal legitimacy, except in instances where China's ideological interests are perceived to be under threat. In these instances, it is likely that the conflict between China's economic and ideological needs will once again return to the fore in Chinese foreign policy.

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